















# BRITISH LABOR AND THE WAR

*Reconstructors for  
a New World*

BY  
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AND  
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## INTRODUCTION

PUBLIC attention has been absorbed in what has been happening in Russia. Now in Germany. The working class revolutions there have been so much more spectacular as to have quite overshadowed the formidable British labor movement or to have been confused with it.

Some writers on the great war have said that the thing which set this war off from any known for a thousand years has been that it was the wrestlings of whole peoples; that here we have been dealing with folk movements unlike any that had occurred since the days when Saxons and Franks, Teutons and Huns and Slavs swept over western Europe. However that may be, there has been another folk movement at work in the midst of war in Europe which is tremendously significant. It asserted itself disruptively in various stages of the Russian revolution. The same forces are at work elsewhere. And in England we have the attempt to harness them in a great constructive working class movement which will make for changes in the economic and political life, in the period following the war, as sweeping as the changes wrought by those middle-class movements which manifested themselves in the ascendancy of nationalism, and in the struggle for liberalism within the nations.

In all European history, we have had in England forecasts of fundamental changes that were coming on the continent. The English reformation preceded the continental reformation; the English swing to parliamentary government and democracy preceded the political revolutions on the continent. For the most part Englishmen did not go through anything like the travail and bitterness which the continental peoples traversed in running the same course. They did not come out at the same point; but they showed the trend, and they showed it in advance. Even so, what has been going forward under the stress of war among the wage-earning population of the island commonwealth foreshadows changes which will affect and condition the whole fabric of western civilization.

Being a folk movement, it is not possible to compress it into any one channel. It is not like the single tax movement, or the prohibition movement, or the municipal ownership movement as

we have known them in this country, because these are propaganda given over to a single issue. The British labor movement is rather the expression at a hundred points of great tidal impulses at work in the common life. This book can best serve American readers by telling of certain of its eager manifestations—international, political, industrial—that will play an organic part in the period of reconstruction.

PART I  
THE BRITISH LABOR OFFENSIVE



## CHAPTER I

### THE WORKERS' SHOW OF HANDS

At the time the Allied premiers met in Paris in January, 1918, a dry remark was credited to Georges Clemenceau, rugged figure in the political life of France since before the days of the Commune.

"Napoleon was not so remarkable as we thought," he said. "After all, he fought only coalitions."

His epigram put the case for the efforts then on foot to bring about unity among the Allies, both in military operations and in statesmanship. It was natural that the same forces should be at work among the workers as among the governments. And it is characteristic that, just as the British were the last of the great European states to get their full measure of man-power and industrial capacity into swing in the war and, once in, thereafter took over much of the heavy end of the front; so now, after three years of slow crystallization of opinion, the British labor movement came forward to bear the brunt in an Allied labor offensive.

In pursuit of its objectives, this labor drive combined unremitting resistance to Prussian militarism in the field with what Arthur Henderson called the diplomacy of democracy. It drew its dynamic from stirrings deep down in the working life of Great Britain.

Whether the war was to end through a military decision or through negotiations, the British workers served notice that they purposed to have a say in the settlement of the struggle in which they had spent and been spent so unstintedly. They were profoundly at odds with the whole scheme of foreign relations which broke down in August, 1914. They felt that they had paid the piper, and they did not mean to leave their security against future wars solely in the hands of the governing classes with whom they identified this war. They were not sanguine as to the ability of those classes to get out of it what they went into it for, much less to lay a new world order that would stand. They looked to the common feeling and brotherhood of the masses the world over as the only factor sufficiently forceful to checkmate competing commercialisms—as a bond to hold the world together, greater than all the international laws and courts and treaties that could be devised. They forecasted a recoil against the old order of things

which in the period of reconstruction would effect changes in the economic life, nation by nation, profound as those in the political life following the French revolution and the Napoleonic wars, when by the 30's the husks of feudalism were thrown aside and the middle classes asserted themselves in terms of political democracy and representative government. With this difference: education, newspaper reading and interchange of ideas now quicken and bind deeper reaches of the social order. These the great war had cut asunder and isolated. But the working classes, nation by nation, had gone through like experience, and out of their common travail might they not find common purpose?

Thus it was that the British labor men, and behind them Allied labor, set going their procedure to find out, if they could, where the German and Austrian working classes (with whom before the war they had much in common) stood close to them on the issues of the struggle in which they were pitted against each other; what differences separated them; which of these differences were due to ignorance and distortion, and so might be swept away by letting in the light, which of these differences were due to obstacles thrown in the way by other interests in the national life, and so might be combated internally; which of these differences, if any, were in truth irreconcilable, and so must be fought through to a finish. And they believed that their statement of war aims brought the issues back to the unimperialistic bedrock on which they (regardless of what motives actuated other groups in their own nation or in other nations) had gone into the war, and on which they intended to fight to the end—the issues of self-determination, which had clustered about Belgium and which were democracy's answer to militarism and conquest. They believed they could strip off those elements of competitive aggrandizement—forcible annexation, punitive indemnities, economic boycotts and the rest—which had come to encrust these first purposes and had given color on every hand to the propaganda that each people was fighting a war of defense. They believed that these issues were so close to the mainsprings of working class feeling that the German socialists would get out of hand if their majority leaders refused to meet them. They believed that they could drive a wedge between the German working classes and their governments which, sooner or later, would rend the central empires if the workers met the issues and the governments refused.

They were not visionaries, these labor leaders; they did not expect to unravel in a night a skein which had been tangled and knotted by years of blood and strain. They did not waste time in debating whether it could be cut with the sword, with those who

had foreshadowed a swift military decision with every spring. Rather, without stinting their support to the armies in the field, they set about the slow task of putting as much courage, patience, hard thinking and mass action into their labor offensive as went, say, into preparing for a half mile of artillery fire, barrage and infantry assault. And they held it as reprehensible to ignore and neglect the marshaling of civil pressure in the great struggle as it would have been to ignore the air service or the navy.

They were not defeatists, these labor leaders. They were as determined in their project in the fall of 1917, when the British second army thought it had turned the corner of the war at Paeschendale Ridge, as they were at their meeting the February following, when the whole talk on the western front was of how to meet the anticipated German drive. They did not abandon it in the weeks of strain when the German armies forged toward Amiens and Paris. They held firmly to it in the midst of the tremendous counter-offensives of the summer of 1918, in which British and Colonials, French, Belgians, Italians and Americans jointly drove the invaders back. They simply did not take stock in the cry that (you could not wage war and exert statesmanship at the same time.) They did not fear that labor negotiations would demoralize the Allied armies; they held that with whole nations at war, civilian morale was as vital as army morale, and that secret treaties, dickers over territory, the mistrust and lack of confidence which come of ill-defined purposes, were forces of disintegration which could be overcome only by bringing the purposes of the war unequivocally out into the open and out at a level upon which the average man would be fully willing to continue to lay down his life and that of his son.

They were not for peace-at-any-price. Their statement of the conditions on which they would continue their support of the war and on which they were prepared to urge peace were affirmative. They were simply through with talking about victory like buying a pig in a poke; about winning the war, without setting forth what ends you hoped to win and without keeping your mind open to any less humanly costly way of achieving those ends.

They were not for a *séparate* peace. Their whole procedure was to organize a common front; and to do it, not, as they believed the governments had done prior to President Wilson's initiative, by arriving at a multiple of their several ambitions, but by cleaving through to what were the great common denominators of democratic purpose.

They were not Bolsheviki. The British labor offensive antedated the advent of the Bolshevik régime. It was the Russian Mini-



malists who cabled concurrence with the British statement; it was with their leaders that they had old associations. But, in common with the workers of all Europe, the British were greatly stirred by the Russian revolutions, and they ascribed in no small part to the Allies themselves (in failing to meet the Russian provisional government half way in the matter of war aims, and in blocking the Stockholm meetings) the overthrow of Kerensky, the cave-in of the Russian armies, and all that those events came to mean. And they believed an outcome on the eastern front altogether different from the subsequent Brest-Litovsk treaties was possible if the same attitude were not persisted in toward the Soviets.

They were not, in fine, anything that the jingo press described them to be in the earlier stages of the movement, and they were not concerned with what it ascribed to them now, except as this afforded powder to their agitation and further identified the contrary policy with those very forces with which, for twenty years past, the British labor movement had wrestled in forcing through domestic industrial and political reforms. Their positions, here sketched in broad outline, were, of course, not altogether different from those held painfully by individual thinkers and small groups in each of the warring countries, individuals and groups that were currently damned for their pains, and that lacked both the mass and momentum to get their proposals across to the general public. But here, shouldering their way up into the arena not only of discussion but of decision, came a body of men who refused, quite as doggedly as the lonelier prophets, to be dislodged by conventional blasts of denunciation and whom the very winds of controversy served only to reveal as a rapidly mustering host.

That this new leadership in western Europe would spring from the labor movement might have been foreseen.

With hold-over parliaments, more or less out of touch with the changes in public opinion, and with coalition governments, short-circuiting the development of party sentiment as such, the policies of the older party groups failed to crystallize while the war was on in a way clearly to differentiate them. Thus, the British Labour Party found its opportunity; the elimination of its secretary, Arthur Henderson, from the British War Council by way of the "door-mat" on August 11, 1917, being the occasion for its action but not its cause. Within the succeeding twelve months it slowly formulated a coherent program, both of foreign and internal policy, which could be weighed against that of the government in power and which offered an alternative, fresher approach to issues of war and peace; a program which on its international side could be taken over by kindred groups in the Allied nations who



had been groping for such leadership, and which had the tremendous reinforcement of being, seemingly, more in line with the free statesmanship of the American president than the course their own governments were able or chose to follow.

That it should be in England that this new labor leadership would emerge might equally well have been forecast. Elsewhere, the groupings had been too fragmentary; the cleavages between extremes. In France and Germany, the socialists had been split by the war. The minority factions had taken a position of opposition to their governments but that had been not only on matters of policy, but on the prosecution of the war itself. In Italy, it had been the majority, but the working classes in the Italian cities had not as yet found common cause with the peasants; the proletariat was immature. In France the syndicalists presented a separate wing of the labor movement, discounting both the parliamentary groups of socialists. Since the fall of 1917, Italy, like France, had been invaded, and the psychology of the situation had been against any organized action which might be construed as counter to the prime duty of getting the invaders out. In undefeated, uninvaded England, the labor movement was freer to assert itself along lines more nearly analogous to those possible in peace times; and it did so.

Moreover, the British Labour Party was made up largely of men who had been "for the war" and who were indispensable to it; who had the disconcerting effrontery to lay down with one hand plans for a great memorial in London to their fellows who had fallen in the conflict, and with the other to set going the nominating machinery for contesting not only the 35 seats they then held in Parliament, but some 300 more.

The Miners' Federation of Great Britain, for example, with four hundred thousand unionists in the British forces, could not lightly be discounted as "slackers." Nor could the Labour Party be set aside as negligible,—with its 2,700,000 members, in the overt act of stretching their tent ropes to include all workers "by hand or by brain,"—with testimony of social unrest drawn by government inquiries from every part of the kingdom,—and with fair prospect that the troops when demobilized would strike hands with them.

So it was that after a Russian government had gone down with its plea for a fresh statement of war aims unmet; after the Russian soviet program had for two months gone unanswered;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The All Russian Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates enumerated 15 points in the form of instructions to its delegate to the Allied War Conference, Paris; the Bolsheviki took over the government and organized a council of National Commissioners on November 7, 1917, in whose name Leon Trotsky, as national commissioner for foreign affairs, sent out the document of 15 points as a "formal offer of an immediate

after a certain noble peer had been soundly scolded as a pacifist Tory for writing a piece to the papers; after President Wilson's earlier declarations had been met with altogether vague if hearty assents; after the U. D. C. leaders and, at their side, a score of like-minded commoners who had never broken silence before, had been denounced by spokesmen for the Cabinet for raising afresh the issue of war aims at Westminster; after all these things, a delegate conference of the British Trades Union Congress (the industrial organization of British labor) and the Labour Party (the political organization of British labor) came forward with their joint statement of war aims on December 28, 1917, and smoked the administration out. A carefully prepared statement was given out by the premier at a conference with labor on the man power bill on January 5, 1918. There followed President Wilson's world-encircling message of fourteen points which the English labor leaders hailed as kindred to their own; and which the French parliamentarians, in a remarkable session of the Chamber, claimed as breathing the very spirit of France, marred only by the consciousness that their own government had not given it utterance first. Whatever considerations inside the British War Cabinet, and whatever commitments to the Allies outside, had inhibited Lloyd George from coming forward earlier, no longer held after labor's show of hands. Rightly or wrongly, the labor group felt that they were the only force strong enough to have opened the way for his statement; the only force strong enough in the future to bring the British government into line on those crucial points of President Wilson's statement, and of their own, where the British official statement was silent; where France and Italy had not spoken.

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America entered the new year (1918) with its full weight thrown in the inter-Allied war councils for that unified command of the armies on the western front which in Foch's hands, and supported by fresh and ever fresher divisions from over seas, was

armistice on all fronts and the immediate opening of peace negotiations;" followed by an invitation of Dec. 6, to all embassies and legations to participate and by the issuance by the Russian plenipotentiaries of six 'basic principles' at Brest-Litovsk, Dec. 22. Count Czernin's six clauses of December 25 were in reply to these Russian formulations; and Lloyd George in the course of his statement of January 5 and President Wilson in the course of his message of January 8 made rejoinder to Count Czernin. Clearly the Allied governments felt the obligation of making a counter statement of war aims at a time they were holding aloof from the Brest-Litovsk meetings. The initiative of the Bolsheviki as well as the pressure of British labor was a factor in the new public declarations. This series of documents was published in "A League of Nations" by the World Peace Foundation, Boston, 1918.

to throw back in defeat Hindenburg's supreme effort to break through. It entered the new year with the President's message on war aims which, in the words of an English journalist, was worth a dozen army corps and a regiment of angels to the democrats of Western Europe.

British labor also entered the new year with freshly girded strength. Nothing would have been worse than for the British people to have come into the weeks of strain throughout the spring and early summer of 1918 with the purposes of the war as fogged as they had been the year preceding. It is not too much to say that, while the bloody gains of the German drive in France were strengthening the grip of the Prussian imperialists upon Germany, the British labor offensive proved a counter force for coherence and endurance at home. In its own statement of war aims and in the statement it elicited from the British government, at the close of 1917, it gave the common people afresh the democratic issues that had fired them in those earlier days of trial in 1914. So doing, like the American president, British labor gave them to the common people of all the Allies.

Meeting in London in February, 1918, representatives of labor and socialist groups in England, France, Italy and Belgium (Rumanian, South Slav and South African delegations sitting in) accepted in substance the war aims put out by British labor in December; called on socialist and labor groups in the central powers to match this declaration; projected a consultative conference with them while the war was on if the conditions laid down were met; endorsed plans for an international labor conference to sit concurrently with the official peace conference whenever held; and called for a labor representative on each national delegation to the latter.

Thus, the early winter months of 1917-18, which marked the turn of the tide in Allied unity in waging war and in democratic statesmanship, witnessed three steps in the deliberate execution of the British labor offensive.

Their first step was to get unanimity on war aims among the labor bodies of Great Britain; their second to bank up majority and minority labor groups among the Allies behind a common program; their third to outflank the trench deadlocks and diplomatic inhibitions that for four years had isolated the working classes of Europe, and to get their conception of an unimperialistic settlement before the workers of the Central Empires. In so doing they sought to find out for themselves first-hand whether or not they might help open a way to a peace which would not only be safe for democracy, but democracy's own.

The succeeding chapters in this section [Part I] will interpret

the slow crystallization of working class opinion in England first in the Labour Party and then in the Trades Union Congress which, in 1917, had led up to the first of these steps. Succeeding sections will interpret the later steps [Part II]; the deep-seated forces which impelled them in the political [Part III] and economic [Part IV] life of Great Britain; labor's share in the swift events of 1918, leading up to the armistice and the end of the war [Part V]; and the presage inherent in these things of British labor's part in the new epoch of reconstruction [Part VI].

## CHAPTER II

### THE NEW MAJORITY IN THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

IF we go back but a year, we find the British Labour Party not at all taking the initiative in the matter of labor diplomacy, but rather hanging back. In January, 1917, its convention at Manchester voted against participating in an international conference as promoted by the Stockholm committee. In March, 1917, its executive turned down an invitation from the French Socialist Party for a conference of Allied socialists in Paris; in May, 1917, it turned down invitations to consultations arranged by the Dutch-Scandinavian committee in Stockholm. It did not respond to the announcement shortly thereafter that the Russian Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies had decided to issue invitations "to the socialist and labor parties of all nations to a conference, with a view to securing the adoption of a general working class policy"—other than to appoint a committee to visit Russia, which never set sail.

Meanwhile, Arthur Henderson, then a member in the British War Cabinet and one of the labor leaders at that time opposed to an international conference, had proceeded to Petrograd on a government mission, in the course of which he met the executive of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council and spoke to them in his capacity as secretary of the Labour Party. It was made clear to him that, whether the British workers participated or not, an attempt would be made by the Russian workers to hold the conference. Out of his experience in Russia, Henderson came to believe that unless negotiations for a constructive peace were associated in the minds of the Russian people with their provisional government, it would crumble—as it later did; he felt that many confused ideas were current in Russia as to the aims for which his fellow countrymen were continuing the struggle; that such a conference would clear them up; and that it would be "highly inadvisable and perhaps dangerous for the Russian representatives to meet representatives from enemy and neutral countries alone." On the other hand, he made it equally clear that British labor could only join in the plan if it were turned from an obligatory conference to a consultation for the purpose of exchanging views.



I made it as plain as I was capable of doing that if a conference was held in which we participated there could be no question of negotiating peace terms. I pointed out that the socialists and labor parties in this and other countries were not yet the nation, and that the only people who were responsible for negotiating actual peace terms were the governments of the respective countries, for upon them rested, on behalf of the people, the entire responsibility.

—This paragraph is quoted from Henderson's report to a special party conference held in London in August, 1917, which followed consultations between Russian and British labor leaders in London, and Russian, British and French labor leaders in Paris, at which the British reconsidered their decision to stay out of the conference; and on the other hand, its non-binding character was agreed to by the others. On Henderson's recommendation and by a vote of 1,846,000 to 550,000, the British Labour Party approved the amended plan.

The parting of the ways came at a special conference held by the party at Central Hall, Westminster, London, on August 10, 1917, when by the majority of 1,296,000 the membership sustained the executive in its resolution:

That the invitation of the international conference at Stockholm be accepted on condition that the conference be consultative and not mandatory.

Preliminary canvasses, according to the London *Times*, indicated that the vote of the miners would carry the decision one way or another; "while the miners' decision was, in turn, believed to be largely dependent on the statement which Arthur Henderson, M.P., labor's representative on the War Cabinet, would make."

Henderson's speech carried the miners, and in the afternoon the resolution came before the conference on motion of representatives of two of the most powerful trade union groups of Great Britain, W. C. Robinson of the textile workers moving it, W. Carter of the miners seconding. The attack came from the right, when J. Sexton of the Liverpool Dock Labourers (47,000 members) moved an amendment that:

While agreeing that he (Henderson) was actuated by a sincere desire to serve the best interests of the British democracy, no case had been made out for the appointment of delegates to the Stockholm or any other conference which would include delegates from enemy countries.

There were times, he said, when loyalty to an executive, particularly in a case like this, meant treason to the rank and file. To go to

Stockholm, he concluded, was to meet men who had not repudiated the brutality of their masters, men whose hands were red with the blood of Capt. Fryatt, Nurse Cavell and the crew of the *Belgian Prince*. When they had repudiated these crimes, and not before, his objection to meeting them would be gone.

His attack was supported by Henderson's fellow labor members of the ministry—G. N. Barnes (Minister of Pensions), who shortly supplanted Henderson as a member of the War Cabinet, and who denounced the proposal of a consultative conference as a distinction between Tweedle-dee and Tweedle-dum; and George Roberts, M.P., then secretary of the Board of Trade, to whose mind Henderson's speech was little more than an endeavor to "take a scenic photograph through a Scotch mist."

Said Barnes:

I say that if you go there you will go to discuss with the Germans and the Russians, and with the Dutch-Scandinavians as a make-weight, or a make-believe, with no other purpose than to vote for peace on any terms. . . . It is a matter as between tweedledum and tweedledee whether you are there in a consultative conference or a mandatory one. It seems to me the difference is very small and if you go at all you will be in the same position whether it is one or the other. The main fact is that if you decide to go there you will be going there to discuss terms of peace. Is this the time to discuss terms of peace in that manner? (Cries of "Yes" and "No.") I think it is not. Whatever are the ostensible purposes of the conference, you will be drawn into a discussion of the formula "No indemnities and no annexations." Do not let us be misled by phrases. This war will end in a way that will be determined by the relative strength of parties at the end of it, and if we end this war now the Germans will decide for you what is meant by "no indemnities and no annexations." I decline to be led away by any such phrase-mongering. I believe that the only way of ending this war is the way in which our boys at the front are trying to end it.

Said Roberts:

The Stockholm Conference would be the greatest embarrassment to those who were seeking to bring order out of chaos in Russia. What M. Kerensky and his government needed now was to be left alone. The Stockholm Conference would only sow further dissension and play into the hands of the greatest enemies of law and order in Russia. As to misrepresentations of British views and perversion of the British cause in Russia, parts of their own movement were responsible for it as much as anything. The conference would be futile unless it included representatives of American labor. Mr. Gompers and his colleagues had scented the futility of the thing,

but they saw the German hand behind it. The German agents in Petrograd had played upon the inexperienced representatives of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council, and had engineered the movement not because they hoped it would reestablish fraternity, but because they hoped that the purpose of the Allied nations could be again distorted, and because they knew that at the conference they would have an overwhelming representation and could carry everything before them. The conference would weaken the national spirit and prejudice the Allied cause and he was certain that the great mass of the people were opposed to it. The German people were as united and determined for the war as when they began it. They had gloated over every barbarity. For representatives of the British working classes to go into conference with representatives of such people would be a gross betrayal of the men who constituted our great army.

As one now of a minority in the British Labour Party executive, Roberts with sarcasm congratulated Henderson on being welcomed into the new majority. The welcome had come from Ramsay MacDonald, who for a while was unable to proceed owing to a fusillade of interruptions from various parts of the hall, and the chairman, after much ringing of his bell, had to appeal to the conference to support him in maintaining order. The incident put in terms of personality the shift which had taken place. MacDonald stated the case for the "left," which now for the first time since 1914 found itself part of the majority; saying, according to the *London Times*:

Russia wanted their support. The revolution which awakened such enthusiasm in their hearts, and struck through with a magnificent beam of light the darkness that was lying over Europe, tottered and trembled day by day, and the one thing that would give it a firm democratic foundation was that the democracy of Russia should be assured that the democracy of Europe was consulted on the war and on war aims. British labor was asked to go to that consultation, and to put their views alongside the views of other people, to assure Russia that there was no imperialism in this war, and that democracy was fighting the battle of democracy from an international point of view. That is what Russia wants. Is British labor not going to it?

And that is not all. Do not we want to-day from the international democracies of Europe a clear statement of what we stand for, so that he who runs may read? To-day we are revising our aims officially. Why cannot we revise our aims democratically at the same time? Why cannot we lay down in clause after clause what we will regard as the security upon which alone peace can be made and ask our German friends (loud protest) how far they agree with them and how far they disagree with them?



Before the vote, Henderson's support from the center was voiced by J. H. Thomas of the National Union of Railwaymen. He was quoted as saying:

He hoped that they would hear no more of the enemies of our country and the friends of our country. He was as true a patriot as anybody, and he was satisfied that no German would browbeat him or compel him to do anything contrary to the best interests of this country. Did they condemn the meeting of Lord Newton with German representatives a few weeks ago, which resulted in immense good to our men in the enemy's hands? Did any one believe that at some time or other they would not have to meet the enemy? . . .

He would warn those who threatened that steps would be taken to prevent any delegate going, no matter what the decision of the conference might be, to be careful what they were doing. The time would come when those who aided and abetted that policy would be the first to suffer.

In its comment on this meeting, the London *Times* scored Henderson and declared that his position as a minister was clearly at an end (as it straightway proved)—“not because of any divergence about the war, but because his maneuvers during the last fortnight are incompatible with every principle of solid government;” i.e., his good faith in “attempting the impossible performance of running one policy as a labor leader and another as a member of the cabinet.” It denounced the Stockholm meeting as follows:

One has only to ask what belligerent governments are in favor of the conference at all in order to see what lies under the surface. The only governments which patronize it are the enemy governments; all the Allied nations are against it. Surely that is enough to show its true purpose. Whether it is called mandatory or consultative, it is a trick to get representatives of allied labor to hobnob with “our German friends” and to film them in the act in order to cheer up the German people and convince them that the peace they desire—a German peace—is at hand, if they will only maintain their faith in Hindenburg and U-boats.

The *Times* attributed the three and one-half to one vote in part to the system by which the miners, railway men and other large bodies voted in blocks—an element of the strength of the central group and a cause for complaint on the part of both the extreme right and left; but the “real explanation” was to be found, it said, in Henderson's speech:

The point is that there are two Stockholm conferences, or two conceptions of that elusive gathering. The first is that its decisions shall be binding on those who attend it; the second that it shall be

purely consultative and not bind anybody. Now the invitation is to a conference of the first kind, but yesterday's decision is an acceptance of the second. It is, in fact, the acceptance of an invitation which has not been given and a rejection of the one that has.

The *Times* was right in its analysis of the paradox of invitations: British labor cut the knot by separating itself from Stockholm and its antecedents, and by doing its own inviting to a conference of its own fashioning; and, six months later, the *Times* was saying that its workmanship was good. Four of those six months were spent in the slow formulation of platform and procedure. Henderson was charged by the Prime Minister with breach of faith as a member of the War Cabinet, and resigned; and announcement was made that the British government would issue no passports to delegates to attend the Stockholm meeting. An inter-Allied conference called by the British section of the International Socialist Bureau [London, August 21, 1917] brought together sixty-eight delegates representing eight nationalities, but reached no definite agreements with respect either to war aims<sup>1</sup> or to the conditions of an international conference, and apparently got snarled up over the question of minority and majority representations and votes.

Then it was that the British labor movement started in to build up from the bottom. And the first opportunity which offered showed the overwhelming swing of feeling among the rank and file. This was at the Blackpool meeting in early September (1917) of the Trades Union Congress—the inclusive national organization of British trade unions in the economic field. By a vote of 2,849,000 to 91,000, a compromise resolution which was put forward by Robert Smillie and seconded by Will Thorne, threw the Stockholm meeting as such into the junk heap, emphatically protested as a matter of principle against the government's refusal to give passports, declared that a general agreement among the working classes of the Allied nations was “a fundamental condition of a successful international congress” and recommended that the Parliamentary Committee of the congress be empowered to “assist, arrange and take part in such a conference.” The chronicle of this action of the Trades Union Congress will be found in Chapter IV.

The executive of the Labour Party accepted this resolution as a basis for joint action with the Trades Union Congress. A joint committee was created to formulate a memorandum on war aims,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The original British Labour Party memorandum on war aims, drawn up for this August, 1917, conference, was the basis of the later memoranda.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix I.

and the joint conference of the two bodies held in London in December, 1917, adopted the joint draft. The chronicle of this joint-action will be found in Chapter V.

These characteristics stand out, throughout, in the procedure of the British labor offensive, as distinct from the movements which preceded it: That its proposed international labor and socialist conference was to be consultative and not mandatory; that it was to be a voluntary exchange of views and not an attempt to assume government function, and that it was in no way to interfere with military effort. Further, the procedure provided not for a loose body of labor groups meeting for the first time in the presence of a solid Germanic delegation, but for joint action by a real alliance of Allied labor; it provided for going into the conference with a deliberately formulated program of aims which might be modified as to details, but in which the democratic principles at stake were nailed down, and (as later developed) it provided for subscription to those principles and evidence of readiness to press for them as a prerequisite on the part of any German units which might participate.

All this was at great variance with the earlier conference projects associated with Stockholm and with the Russian Soviet in 1917, which were to have been much more binding but were unorganized. It was, however, as much at variance with the former stand-off position of British labor and with the subsequent stand-off position of American labor, as it was with the procedure of the Brest-Litovsk meetings of 1917-18, engineered by the Bolsheviki. These last were marked by the abandonment of military activity and were predicated on the announced belief of the Russian extremists that the German working classes would and could hold their governments up to a course which would safeguard the republic and the revolution. The strength and the weakness of the Brest-Litovsk meetings was that, as the London *Spectator* put it, they were like the pounding of a mailed fist into a feather-bed. Now, the British labor offensive partook of the nature neither of a gauntlet nor of a bed-tick—rather, of a crow-bar.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SWING TOWARD THE LEFT IN THE BRITISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS

BUT we must look deeper than the form of international meetings, or even the desire of British labor to help keep Russia in the war, to understand the "swing toward the left" in mass sentiment, or the determined moderate leadership which moulded that sentiment into a constructive social leverage. Some characteristic labor debates will help to make this clear, and for this purpose let us turn from the political to the industrial field and follow three annual meetings [Birmingham, 1916; Blackpool, 1917; Derby, 1918] of the British Trades Union Congress (over 4,000,000 members), the greatest and the most insular of the British labor bodies, which before the war had taken little part in foreign affairs. It had been content to let the General Federation of Trade Unions (800,000 members) function as participant in the pre-war international trade union body with headquarters in Berlin, and build up close relations with the American Federation of Labor, also a participant; though the congress itself exchanged fraternal delegates with the American Federation. Meanwhile, not only the British Labour Party, but the Independent Labour Party and other British socialist organizations had long had active affiliations with the International Socialist Bureau with headquarters in Brussels.

#### BIRMINGHAM: 1916

At the Birmingham meeting of the British Trades Union Congress, in September, 1916, a circular letter was read from Samuel Gompers who addressed "all the national labor movements of the world," inviting them to coöperate in the holding of an international trade union congress, at the same time and place as the meeting of the official peace plenipotentiaries at the close of the war. It was reported that no program or theory as to what such a congress should do was offered in the circular; the representatives were to be free to use whatever opportunity came to promote the interests of the workers in connection with the terms of settlement. The Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress recommended that British labor should coöperate, but by a vote of



1,486,000 votes to 723,000 the Congress itself struck the resolution out.

This was at the close of England's second year of war. Gompers' circular was in line with action taken by the American Federation of Labor at its San Francisco convention and was dated March 23, 1916, or a year before the United States entered the war. The few arguments on the floor of the British Congress in 1916 in support of Gompers' proposal were not very different from those which Gompers himself was to encounter, two years hence, when, no longer a neutral, and an opponent of any war time meeting with German labor, he attended the British Trades Union Congress at Derby in 1918. C. G. Ammon of the Fawcett Association (6,400 members), who had been a fraternal delegate to the San Francisco convention, appealed to the Birmingham meeting of 1916 not to be misled by prejudice. He was quoted as follows:

The intention of the American Federation was that the proposed international labor congress should be representative of the workers of all the belligerent nations, that the workers who were suffering in every country should be called together at the end of the war to consider ways and means of making such a tragedy impossible in the future. They should remember that when the fighting was over the German working man, like the British working man, would still have his work to do in the world, and would find that he and his dependents were suffering even more than those here. The German workers were no more to blame for the great catastrophe which had come upon the world than the British workers were able to prevent the imposition of Prussian institutions here. (Cheers and some booing.)

But these were lonely voices. Jack Jones of the General Workers (164,000 members) charged the German socialists with "selling" the international labor movement. "Under the plea that they were afraid of invasion," he said:

they decided to invade and on the altar of liberty they sacrificed liberty. As one who came from Ireland he was no defender of imperialism, but he would rather have the devil he knew than the devil he did not know, and he would rather have a slave-driver of his own blood than one of another blood.

To quote other delegates as reported in the *London Times*:

T. McKerrell (Miners' Federation) asked whether the socialists of Germany who might attend this conference would be the socialists whom the Kaiser sent to Belgium after the massacres to persuade the Belgian people that they ought to welcome German rule, and if

so whether the Belgian workmen who escaped massacre would sit in the same room.

George Roberts, M.P., said the British workers should not sanction any negotiations with the German Social Democrats or their government until the German democracy had purged themselves of Kaiserdom and all for which it stood. Some people thought they were inclined to do it; he did not believe it. The German socialists, like the German people as a whole, believed in militarism as a means of dominating the world. If this proposal were persisted in it would mean, for generations to come, the biggest split in the British labor movement that they had ever dreamed of. The German appreciated nothing but force and brute power, and nothing else would induce him to expiate his crimes.

—Arguments, all of them apparently, which Gompers took to heart so entirely that with the lapse of time, and their positions reversed, he employed no others more vehemently in countering the later British program which embodied his own proposal as one of its chief features.

At Birmingham, also, Will Thorne, M.P., said he would welcome a congress of labor from Allied or neutral countries, but characterized as "absurd" the suggestion to have "delegates from Germany, Austria, Turkey and Bulgaria at a congress that was to advise our plenipotentiaries upon the terms of peace." He believed that 99 per cent of the people of England would oppose any government which attempted to make terms of peace until every German was cleared out of Belgium and France.

### BLACKPOOL: 1917

Twelve months later, at Blackpool as indicated in the preceding chapter, we find Thorne seconding Smillie's resolution, which came from the Parliamentary Committee of which both were members, that the Trades Union Congress "assist and take part," not only in an inter-Allied, but an inter-belligerent conference. Thorne said in part:

There are deep-rooted convictions in the minds of many of the members of our unions. Some are taking one side, and some the other, and, therefore, it does appear to me that those responsible for the respective organizations to-day have a tremendous task in front of them to keep the members united during the rest of the war. There are little differences of opinion amongst us to-day; but, so far as my opinions are concerned, when the war is over, I shall be quite prepared, if the other side is willing to meet together again upon the one common platform, to fight the common enemy—and

that is organized capital—right throughout the length and breadth of this world.

Delegates of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union (55,000 members), which at the outset of the war got an internment camp set up for German seamen employed on British ships, and looked after them, were the very ones who led the fight against the resolution at Blackpool.

Said J. Henson:

Over 6,000 men of the British mercantile marine have been murdered by German submarines. You have heard of men, in days gone by, being cast away at sea, and the time came when they had to cast lots as to which should die so that the others might live. Only a short time ago, the steamer *Cariba* was in the Bay of Biscay, when she was torpedoed by a submarine. The lifeboat and the jolly-boat were got out, and the submarine sunk the jolly-boat, with the result that in the lifeboat twenty-two men had to drift about for nine solid days, with only a few biscuits and a small supply of water. One by one they died from the cold, for in March we had bad weather. The captain and fireman and engineer were dropped over the side of the boat, and on the ninth day there were nine survivors, who had been frost-bitten from their knees, and had their feet off and their legs, when they were at last rescued and taken to the hospital. That is the sort of "friendliness" we receive from the Germans, towards whom you ask us to adopt a friendly attitude in this resolution. If you came into our trade union office—Thomas, MacDonald, or any one else—and listened to the stories of the men who, after being torpedoed four, five, and six times, have willingly gone back to sea to bring food to every man who is sitting in this congress, you would not ask us to meet our enemies round a friendly table.

We can never meet the German again, in the future, in the international movement. Our men are bred and born internationalists, and they have done their best to work to the spirit of their old traditions, but the time has come when the cry has gone forth from our members—from those who have lost their lives, and the women and the children they have left behind—that never again will we meet these men in the old friendly way. The 6,000 murdered men who lie at the bottom of the sea, with their sightless eyes staring at us in our dreams, are a reminder of the foul deeds that have been committed by the Germans, and these victims of barbarous brutality make mute but effective appeal to us, their friends and survivors, to reject with scorn the suggestion that we should meet the countrymen of those who have thus requited the faithfulness of our comrades to the highest traditions of the sea. The Seamen's Union has done a good deal for the international movement, but as a man who has eaten their bread, and has lived their life, and will share the death they have died, I solemnly declare in this Congress that

the seamen of this country will absolutely refuse to take part in any movement with these men, and that they will decline to carry delegates to any conference with which they are associated.

This last was a threat which in the course of time the sailors carried out.

"Have you heard the story of the *Belgian Prince*?" asked J. Havelock Wilson, president of the Sailors and Firemen, who attacked the Parliamentary Committee, significantly enough, also, for including the socialist groups in their proposed congress:

Have you heard the story where they discarded the lifeboats, took off the life-belts, and submerged the ship? And yet some of you—[here the speaker broke down, amid the sympathetic silence of the Congress]—and yet some of you would be content to meet these men! You would take the blood-stained hands of murderers within your own! . . .

I took every precaution to bring to the notice of the organized workmen of Germany what our men have suffered. I was turned down. So you can quite understand the attitude of the seamen. Yet you would ask the government to withdraw from the position they have taken upon this question and to issue passports for this conference at Stockholm. That is to say, you are willing to throw upon the British seamen the responsibility of refusing to carry those who were going to meet our murderers. Well, the seamen will not hesitate to accept that responsibility. We will never carry these men.

One policy the seamen will pursue. We have got to teach Germany a lesson. Germany is a nation gone wrong from top to bottom. . . .

The case could not have been put more poignantly. Later on this Blackpool Congress of 1917 passed a resolution roundly condemning the "barbarous practices employed by enemy submarine commanders" and calling on the "working class forces" of the Central Empires to "use every effort in order to guarantee that all methods and means of life-saving should be utilized when merchant tonnage is sunk." British labor as a whole later called for reparation for seamen and passengers who had gone down in ships sunk in violation of international law and for rigorous inquiry and judgment on the violators.

But, on the issue lying back of this question of atrocities (cast here in terms of fellow workers murdered at sea), when the vote was taken at Blackpool, the majority in favor of the resolution setting going the procedure for an international meeting was as 31 to 1. J. Cotter of the Ship Stewards (7,000 members), who,



after the *Lusitania* was sunk by a German submarine, had gone down to identify the bodies of "my own shipmates who were concerned in that great tragedy," was one of those who spoke in its favor and in reply to Wilson; Ben Tillett of the dockers (47,000 members) was another. R. Williams of the Amalgamated Laborers (6,000 members) voiced the attitude of the radicals:

I join with Mr. Clynes and Mr. Thomas in saying that no words of mine can adequately convey the respect I have for the seamen of this country. We are told that it is not possible or desirable that the representatives of Great Britain shall confer with, and shake hands with, the representatives of the German working classes. The case of the seamen is really good on its sober official side, but if and when the circumstances required such a step to be taken, your shipowners would have no hesitation in using the services of the German prisoners of war to-day.

I have accompanied Wilson and Henson and Cotter to the Admiralty and the Board of Trade, and time and time again we have protested against the damnable iniquity of the British shipowners employing Lascars and Chinamen. I have in my office the protests of men who have had their ships sunk under them two or three times, and they have been told that there is no work for them because the shipowners, in their search for more and more profits, have replaced them with Chinese and Lascars. I can quote from Mr. Wilson's own letters on this subject, which are now lying at my office. . . . I can see that the whole of Europe is going to be one seething mass of discontent among the workers after the war, and I want this trade union movement, on its own horny-handed side, to bestir itself and take its proper position in the International. . . .

Many of our politicians and the press will join in acclaiming the statements made by President Wilson from time to time, and President Wilson has said that the world must be made safe for democracy. Then I say that democracy alone can accomplish the task. Are you not smarting under the taunt of the Cecils, who have the bluntness to express the mind of the governing class concerning you? The diplomats are striving by underhand overtures to compose a peace satisfactory to themselves, and I am assured upon unquestionable authority that this war is no different from other wars. These men will carry on their secret machinations. From the disclosures in the newspapers this morning you will find that intrigue was going on in 1901, 1904 and 1905 between the Hohenzollerns and others against this country. It is time that we put an end to this damnable witches' cauldron. Kings have gone already, and we are told that the Kaiser must go. Then I say, praise God when there will be a notice "to let" outside Buckingham Palace!

J. Bromley, secretary of the Locomotive Firemen & Engineers (34,000 members), followed with this:

It is all right, Mr. Chairman and fellow delegates, to suggest that we cannot shake hands with "the bloody Germans," not yet; but if we fail in this great movement to recognize the one essential factor that it is not the working class of this country or of Germany, or any other country, who have caused this war, or are now making it continue, we shall never get a right perception of the problem that faces us, or find a solution of it. I think, if I may say so, that it is surprising to many of us that this great movement of ours, and even our supposedly intelligent leaders, are losing sight of that fact. We are acting upon the same principle that operates in the case of a couple of dogs who are thrown in the pen to fight each other, or when cocks are put into the cockpit. In our blind, unreasoning passion, we are fighting each other at the behest of other people. We appear to be as ignorant of the real issue as the dogs in the pen or the cocks in the cockpit. We have got to turn upon the people outside who are setting us at each other's throats. When we do that, we shall say, not in the ambiguous language of this report from the Parliamentary Committee, but straightforwardly as Britishers, that if we do not now meet these Germans, by the time we do wake up to it, it will be too late for any useful purpose. That is the position.

But at Blackpool the preponderance of argument on inter-allied and inter-belligerent meetings had swung to the affirmative side; it was no longer espoused by lone spokesmen, and it was the big moderate leaders who this year met the issue as raised by the seamen.

Said J. H. Thomas, secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen (341,000 members), who had come to America the spring before as a member of the British Mission to give American labor and employers the benefit of English experience in girding for war:

I am first going to submit that there is no delegate in this hall who could listen unmoved to the case of the Seamen; and nobody knows better than Wilson and Henson that there are many of us who disagree profoundly with their particular view who are not wanting in their admiration for the magnificent heroism of the seamen of these islands. But, after all, this is a congress representative of labor; and if it were true that the war could be settled and peace could be declared by English and Germans not meeting—as Mr. Wilson says—then there would be indeed great force in his argument. But he knows perfectly well that if the war were to go on for another twenty years, there must come a time when a meeting of some kind will have to take place. . . . In the second place, there is no difference of opinion in our movement with respect to the proposition that when peace is discussed the views of labor should be effective. We all know that all the horrors of this war—that the germs of this war—are to be found in previous patched-up

peaces. Every war has been the result of an inconclusive peace, and a peace in which the common people of the world were never consulted. Therefore, we say to this congress that with all the sacrifices which labor has made, with the magnificent response in life and treasure that they are giving daily, are we not justified in assuming that the great labor movement is anxious that when peace has to be discussed, labor's voice must be heard; and it must be the people's peace, and made by the people. . . .

Said J. R. Clynes, M.P., of the General Workers (164,000 members), who twelve months later was to become food controller of the British Isles:

We were all deeply moved by the eloquence and emotion of the speeches of the two men who represent the Sailors' and Firemen's Union in the opposition to this resolution; and we feel that they spoke as trade union leaders whose members have suffered in a special degree from the murderous methods of modern German warfare. We can assure Mr. Wilson and his union that they have the deepest sympathy of the trades union movement; but we also want him to ask his members to regard the war situation now as something even greater than the loss which his union has suffered, and higher than the feeling of indignation which naturally now moves his colleagues and himself. . . .

. . . Until we find an immense change in German opinion from the official spokesmen, a conference with the German people would be folly. If it took place, you can well imagine what would happen. I can trace my attendance to the first international conference back to the days of my youth, when, some 20 years ago, I attended Zurich; and, in the corner of the room, I saw men with knives in their possession. I was present at the recent conference of Allies in London, and again I saw a great difference of opinion between us. What is the use of compelling these men to meet together? You only compel them to make an exhibition before the labor and socialist forces of the world. You compel them to enter the conference in the form of an inglorious row that can do no good to the labor movements or to the common interests of us all. . . .

I believe the Parliamentary Committee is now putting forward a proposal which is not merely based upon a mature discussion of opposing points of view but also, and more particularly, upon the experience of the past few weeks. They have seen that it is no use having an artificial and forced conference. . . .

DERBY: 1918

Thomas, Clynes, Henderson—the names will recur again in succeeding chapters when we find them as the organizers of the great moderate central strength of the British Labour Party in its war

and peace offensive, just as they occurred again at the meeting of the British Trades Union Congress at Derby, in September, 1918, when they met and routed a determined effort to undermine that offensive by antagonistic forces in British public life—forces which sought to split the Trades Union Congress on the international issue through such spokesmen for the policy of non-intercourse as Gompers of America and Hughes of Australia, and which sought to split the political labor movement by starting a purely trade union party (with the socialist elements left out) in opposition to the British Labour Party. At Derby<sup>1</sup> we find Havelock Wilson holding a great mass meeting for the sailors and their wrongs, designed to play into both moves, but when it came to the Congress itself, we find it standing again shoulder to shoulder with the British Labour Party; find Thomas and Thorne mover and seconder of a resolution which reaffirmed the policies set going at Blackpool the year before.

But Derby takes the chronicle beyond the period dealt with in this chapter—up to the close of 1917—which, between Birmingham and Blackpool, saw the shift in labor sentiment from right to left in the great British Trades Union Congress.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XVII.



## CHAPTER IV

### BRITISH LABOR UNITED ON WAR AIMS

LATE in the session at Blackpool, Henderson, speaking as fraternal delegate from the Labour Party, personified the issues of foreign policy before the Trades Union Congress; and the official report records that he was welcomed there (September, 1917), less than a month after his enforced retirement from the War Cabinet, "with a warmth of demonstration almost without precedent in the history of those gatherings."

He said in part:

The Labour Party welcome most enthusiastically the recommendations set out in the resolution relating to the development of the work of the Parliamentary Committee. The possibility of the mother of congresses taking her proper place in the ever-increasingly important work in the international field of politics is one that must be viewed with keen satisfaction by all true friends of the labor movement. If I may be permitted to say so, I join with the delegate who spoke earlier in the week, and say emphatically that it has been to the impoverishment of international politics that this congress has not taken a larger share in the work in days gone by. . . .

I believe, sir, that, so far as the future is concerned, a properly organized and thoroughly representative working-class international movement will not only make military wars, but economic wars, well-nigh an impossibility. And who would dispute the essential need of such a force, especially when we remember the bitter experience through which we have gone in the past three years? If we had such a force, it would be the finest expression of a League of Nations that could be imagined, because it would be a League of the Common Peoples throughout the whole civilized world. I do not mind confessing—though possibly some advantage will be taken of the confession—that the indispensable necessity to this desirable state of affairs is the destruction, the complete destruction, of absolute government, with its Kaisers and its Czars, to be replaced by a free democracy. Is it too much to say that this great world conflict, which has entailed such tremendous sacrifices in blood, treasure, and effort, could only be finally successful—and I emphasize that word "finally," for I am afraid that some people mistake the military victory for the final and complete success—could only be finally successful when autocratic government has been com-

pletely and forever destroyed? May I say—though the position may not commend itself to all of you—that this is the great reason why I would rather consult with the German minority before peace than I would with the representatives of a discredited autocratic government when a military victory has been secured?

I do not challenge one word of the magnificent speech made by the leader of the American delegation this morning in what he said in regard to some of the German socialists;<sup>1</sup> but I think we should be fair to our comrades, and we ought to be especially fair to a minority, and more particularly to a minority that has had to labor, because of its conscience, under the peculiar difficulties which the German socialist minority has had to contend with—and has nobly contended—during the past three years. Take the position of Liebknecht—Liebknecht, Bernstein, Haase, and others of the small group that stood together in spite of militarism of their own nation. They have stood aloof from their own government, and have done what little they could to thwart the base designs of their government. Therefore, much as we may deplore the attitude of the majority, let us give honor where honor is due. . . .

The promoters of the Stockholm conference in Great Britain were prepared to leave the settlement of the peace conditions to the governments, who alone are responsible to the entire nation; but we of all classes have suffered so much—and which amongst us at these tables has not got lying beneath the sod a son or some one else who was near and dear to us?—we belong to the class which has given the most and suffered most, and we shall not allow this matter to rest in the hands of diplomatists, secret plenipotentiaries, or politicians of the official stamp, unless they are prepared to have some regard for the opinion of the common people.

Delegates wielding in all 3,400,000 votes attended the special conference at Central Hall, Westminster, December 23, 1917, at

<sup>1</sup> Two fraternal delegates of the American Federation spoke. James Lord of the United Mine Workers of America, and John Golden, of the Textile Workers, both of the old school of labor leadership in the States. A paragraph from the latter's address will put the point of their remarks:

"I question whether there is any country in the whole wide world where the voice of labor would not have been raised in protest if the government participated in the cruelties which the German government have participated in. And there is only one of two things. The German labor movement is either in sympathy with those cruelties, or they are moral cowards in not expressing their disapproval. There must be a reckoning; and we believe, in our American way, that there is only one thing to do, and that is to defeat the German first and then try to talk to him afterwards."

A different message was brought by David Rees in behalf of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, who complimented the gathering for being "big enough to accept the truce of the Parliamentary Committee," and expressed himself as favoring an international conference "as speedily as possible."

which as a result of the initiation at Blackpool, the war aims memorandum framed jointly by the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive Committee of the Labour Party was submitted.<sup>1</sup> There was a letter from the Premier, assuring the delegates that:

A statement in regard to the war aims of the Allies can, of course, only be made in agreement with the other nations who are fighting in alliance together in the war.

The question of issuing a fresh joint declaration on this subject is one which is constantly kept in view by the Allied governments, but it is not one about which it is possible for the British government to speak by itself. We had looked forward to an interchange of views on this subject with the delegates appointed by the Russian government to attend the conference held in Paris last month, but to our regret the absence of any representatives of Russia at that conference made any such consultation impossible. . . .

To my mind, the ideals for which we are fighting to-day are precisely the same as those for which the British Empire entered the war.

We accepted the challenge thrown down by Prussia in order to free the world once and for all from the intolerable menace of a militaristic civilization, and to make possible a lasting peace by restoring the liberty of the oppressed nationalities, and by enforcing respect of those laws and treaties which are the protection of all nations, whether great or small.

Within a few days following this conference, Lloyd George had reversed himself in the matter of a distinctly British formulation of aims; at a meeting with labor he came across, without waiting for the Allies, in a document far more explicit than any hitherto put out. But up to the period of the armistice, ten months later, no joint statement was forthcoming. Henderson countered at the time, in moving the adoption of the memorandum, by saying (the quotations are in the indirect wording of the news report of the *London Times*):

Faith in brute force as an ideal instrument for attaining national ambitions, whether right or wrong, must be destroyed. In order to make the world safe for democracy the peace settlement must contain all the conditions and safeguards essential to the future life and national development of free peoples, be they large or small. Secret diplomacy, compulsory military service, profit from the manufacture of the instruments of destruction, should be rendered unnecessary in a society of free nations. This is the great spiritual change which working-class organizations are especially concerned

<sup>1</sup> Appendix I.

to secure by any peace settlement. The bond of a nation must be given to the settlement by the people, for that is the only way in which the civilization of the future can be provided with the safeguards and guarantees that will be adequate and effective. . . .

May I remind the conference that in July last, on my return from Russia, I said that until there had been a definite restatement of war aims and some prospect of an international conference it was doubtful whether the Russian army and the majority of the moderate socialists, on whom so much depended, would give of their best for the successful prosecution of the war? Can it be doubted that the ignoring of the warning thus given contributed to the present awful Russian disaster?

Take the question of the League of Nations. President Wilson and the American people are very much interested in this proposal; in fact it would be no exaggeration to say that America is fighting for little if anything else. Yet this is the very moment chosen by Sir Edward Carson (some hissing) and a section of the press to treat that proposal with scorn and contempt.

#### And of the general situation:

It is scarcely necessary to remind this conference that the war is running far into the fourth year. Each day makes its further demands of sacrifice, destruction and death. The impoverishment of the world in the unprecedented losses of life, property and material continues. The engines of destruction are multiplied and science is applied for the purposes of death and not for promoting the creative and constructive functions of life. The world is stunned and appalled by these grievous losses, and a crushed and bleeding humanity desires to know if the continuance of this tragedy is essential to a just and lasting peace. We all of us recognize that the evil effects of Germany's policy of aggressive militarism and world domination must be destroyed, that Germany's autocracy must give place to a German democracy, that militarism not only in Germany, but universally (loud cheers) must be forever discredited, and that adequate provision must be made to maintain peace among the free democracies of the world by the establishment of a complete league of democratic nations. We all recognize that all dishonorable and unjust ambitions or world domination, whether they be military, political, or commercial, must be renounced by every nation.

There was an effort from the extreme right, by Havelock Wilson of the Sailors and Firemen (55,000 members) to have the memorandum rejected. Wilson recounted again the deliberate murders at sea; denounced the procedure as a covert effort to drive those "men out of the government who were representing labor, to suit their own selfish purposes and policy;" and said that his answer to the question, "What are our war aims?" was "Get on with the



war." And there was an effort from the extreme left, by E. C. Fairchild of the British Socialist Party, to refer back a passage reaffirming the resolve to fight until victory was achieved, as, he said, it had "become abundantly clear that victory in the old military sense could never be secured by the continuance of the war." Wilson was voted down by a show of hands, 25 to 1, and Fairchild without counting. An effort was made by Stephen Walsh, M.P., on behalf of the Lancashire and Cheshire Miners' Federation, to postpone action for a month on the ground that many branches had not had opportunity to consider the memorandum. This was disputed by Robert Smillie, president of the National Federation of Miners, and defeated.

The new majority showed their strength in the vote—2,132,000 to 1,164,000; and it will serve to quote two of their spokesmen. J. Hill (Boilermakers, 76,000 members), in seconding Henderson's motion, in behalf of the Parliamentary Committee of which he was vice-chairman, contrasted labor's proposals with the plans of the "Paris economic conference for bottling up certain nations by tariffs," and concluded:

The memorandum in your hands points a peaceful and constitutional path to sanity, justice, and democracy. This conference is the first step towards the reconciliation of the workers of all lands.

I have been in as many industrial wars as most men of my age. I have had employers to deal with who were to me as brutal as Kaiser Bill (Cheers). But at no stage in these fights have I at any time refused to negotiate, to meet my enemies, and to settle, if a settlement were possible. I advocate the same policy in international affairs. I supported voluntary recruiting. My members (the Boilermakers) in far too large numbers volunteered. My own four sons all left work of national importance to take their place in the fighting line. I have given thousands of voluntary hours to our government to help in the organization of war work. But I have never forgotten that there is a more excellent way than war for the settlement of disputes, and I am honored to share in presenting this memorandum, believing that it is the first step in offering a reasoned solution of this world-tragedy.

Said J. H. Thomas (National Railwaymen, 341,000 members):

If, as they said, Germany set out for world domination—as he believed she did—and if she believed in the power of militarism, would the acceptance of that document be a triumph for Germany? If they were in a position to say through the working classes of all countries, "Here is a fair, just and honorable peace," and if Germany was in the position to accept it, they would have achieved their

object. But, if she was not, then they must fight on to secure it, because they believed that it was right. . . .

They were not hoisting the white flag. They were not neglecting their duty and their responsibility to those whom they represented; but they were mindful that their country, and all the countries, were being bled white. (Hear, hear.) They were not out to crush German militarism and substitute English militarism in its place. (Hear, hear.) They were out to crush militarism in all forms, in all countries, because when they had crushed militarism they had crushed the real germ that caused all wars. They could only do that by declaring clearly and definitely that just as our hands were clean in 1914, they were clean to-day, and that our aims were equally pure. But they would not be if they were going to have Paris resolutions, if they were going to have an economic war to provide the germs for future war. It was only by a league of nations, standing four-square, that they could defeat militarism in all forms; and then their message would be, not to our own people, not to the Allied people, but to the workers of the world—"United to save the world for the future of the people."

## CHAPTER V

### THE I. L. P. AND THE LEFT

JUST as we turned from the substantial Trades Union Congress to the more fluid Labour Party to gauge the currents affecting British labor, so to get closer to the sources of the new working class feeling we must, in sequence, turn to the well springs of the Independent Labour Party, which was founded in 1893 by Keir Hardie.

Radical, fearless, small in numbers—35,000 before the war; 50,000 at its close—these opportunists had been as rabidly attacked in the past by the more rigid socialists for their want of class bitterness as they were attacked by the forces of privilege for their arraignment of the existing order. They and like minded radicals had been forerunners in setting issues, which later became the watch words of the whole labor movement, through the pages of such papers (barred from oversea's mails during war time) as the I. L. P.'s *Labour Leader*, George Lansbury's <sup>1</sup> *Herald*, the Glasgow *Forward* and the Merthyr *Pioneer*. The I. L. P. had been forerunners in seeing and seizing upon the political power of labor and had their group in Parliament long before the Labour Party was organized by a committee of the Trades Union Congress. They were forerunners in that linking of workers "by hand or by brain" which has this last year been the basis for expansion of the British Labour Party, and their mixed membership has been a leaven in the larger body. Before the war, they were forerunners in recognizing labor's interests in foreign relations and had affiliations in the International Socialist Bureau, independent of the affiliation of the Labour Party. And, during the war, they had been forerunners for peace, pressing for some of the elements in the united war-aims program at a time when the rank and file of labor was wholly unaroused to them. They had a hand in a radical conference at Leeds in June, 1917, which hailed the Russian revolution and sub-

<sup>1</sup> George Lansbury, for example, years ago staked his seat in the Commons on the suffrage issue and lost; only to run again (and lose again) in the December elections (1918), at which, with the passage of time, thousands of English women voted under a franchise given them by the very elements which years before sent him, as he phrased it, "out into the wilderness."

scribed to the soviet formula of "peace without annexations or indemnities, based on the rights of nations to decide their own affairs." This conference advocated the establishment of Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils on the Russian model and its delegation to Russia in the early days of the Revolution was stalled by the action of the government and the sailors' union.

At London on August 10, 1917, when the Labour Party was at length swinging over to an amended Stockholm conference, Philip Snowden, M.P., chairman of the I. L. P., expressed its impatient temper to take part on its own and to go to lengths unendorsed by the new majority. He said:

The minority representatives who go to Stockholm . . . will not be tongue-tied by the views of any majority. We shall go there to say that this slaughter has gone on quite long enough. We shall go there to say that it was not the peoples but the governments that made the war. We shall go there to say that in the last three years governments have been unable to settle this war, and finally, we shall go to say that those whose incapacity has been made so manifest should no longer have the power to gamble with the lives of the people, that the time has come when the democracies of all the nations shall rise and say that this is not a question for a nation, it is not a question for allies, it is a question for the people, and the people now shall take the settlement of this question into their own hands.

In its earlier activities as to foreign policy, the Independent Labour Party had thus operated outside the great labor formations which were not yet ready, and it was now prepared to go entirely beyond the new majority in the positions it espoused. But it had steadily maintained its regularity in domestic affairs as a constituent member of the Labour Party. It had sought to get its own people nominated in the preliminary canvasses, but had supported the regular nominees when chosen. The opposite course was selected by the British Workers' League, one of the new off-shoot organizations of war time, headed by Victor Fisher, a member of the old Social Democratic Party, ranging itself at every point on the extreme "right," and apparently in close affiliation with the government labor group. The League not only attacked the Labour Party after its war aims pronouncements in December, 1917, but announced that it would nominate candidates for Parliament in opposition in some constituencies. When this matter was brought to the attention of three well-known labor leaders who had lent their names to the league, they resigned, and at the Nottingham convention (January, 1918) it was the general sentiment that all



members of the Labour Party should get out of the league or out of the party. They could not serve both. Robert Smillie called the British Workers' League on the floor of the convention at Nottingham a "black-leg organization," and in doing so he brought down the house.

We secured testimony of what the shift in sentiment in the rank and file meant, in terms of the workers of one great industry, and as one of the outspoken leaders of the Left saw it, in a statement by Robert Smillie, president of the Lanarkshire Miners' Union (Scotland), president of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain (800,000 members), and chairman of the Triple Alliance of Railway Men, Transport Workers and Miners. His position had been much more consistent than that of Henderson, Thomas and others, with whom he made common cause in the new "labor offensive"; but was much more extreme. With the "swing toward the left," it had to be reckoned with more and more in estimating the trend of British working class opinion.

Said Robert Smillie at Nottingham in January, 1918, at the turn of the year:

It might be said that during the first two years of this war the mine workers of the country were probably the strongest in their devotion to the government in its policies and in their enthusiasm for the war. They always opposed and voted against conscription, but accepted it with other measures as they came along. But as mining was made an exempted industry, it did not fall on them hard.

Now, I feel sure, not only could it be said that their enthusiasm has been seriously dampened, but to a great extent it has gone out altogether. . . .

I think the feeling is now with the majority of the workers of the country that a satisfactory and lasting peace could be secured by negotiation between the Allies and the central powers. The feeling is strongly held by the majority that a peace could have been secured by negotiation twelve months ago, had it not been for the imperialistic aims of the ruling and government classes in the Allied countries and, of course, in Germany and Austria.

I am speaking now for what I believe to be the majority and, more important, the more active and rebellious section. Their view of a settlement is that this war will ultimately be settled by negotiation and not by a military victory on either hand—and that hunger in the belligerent nations and the lack of supply of men will be the deciding factors in bringing this about. If this view is a correct one, then it follows that it must be also correct that negotiations ought to take place now rather than twelve months hence, when hundreds of thousands of men of all the nations whose lives might be saved, will have been wiped out.

This mining county of Nottingham may be taken as one of the

most backward in Great Britain. From the advanced labor and political points of view, it has always been considered reactionary and the home of liberalism and liberal-laborism, as opposed to independence. It is now showing a wonderful movement of a revolutionary character. My own action as president of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, in holding as I do strong views in opposition to the unnecessary continuance of the war, was the subject of severe criticism at branch meetings of the miners in Nottinghamshire earlier in the war. On invitation of the Miners' Association I have addressed three mass meetings this past week. At the one held last night, there were in attendance considerably over two thousand men and women. There were some railway workers present, but the men were chiefly miners. At these meetings every reference to an early settlement of the war by negotiation, every reference to the building up of the International at the earliest possible moment after the war, every statement that liberalism and conservatism, the old political parties, should be thrown aside and all classes of the democracy unite together in the building up of a people's party, perform their own government and carry on the affairs of the nation, in the interest of the democracy—was cheered to the echo.

I should like to add that from very wide experience in public meetings I am simply amazed at the enthusiasm shown. I feel certain that eighteen months ago I should not have been allowed to deliver those speeches here. I find that this change in temper, generally speaking, applies to every district in which I have been during the past few months. Though it is well known everywhere what my views are, and that I have been and am in direct opposition to the vast majority of the national trade union leaders of the country, I am receiving hundreds of letters from branch trade unions and local trade and labor councils to address meetings.

The rank and file of the workers are changing their minds far more rapidly upon the question of the necessity for pushing in the direction of an early peace than are the old leaders. I am convinced that the pressure from the rank and file will within a very short time force a change, if not in the opinions at least in the expressions of many of the leaders of the trade union movement.

There will not be this change in Scotland or Wales, because in those two countries the men have been anxious for peace negotiations for a considerable time. The same thing may be said of Northumberland. But the change which I have described as taking place in Nottingham is going forward in Durham, Yorkshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire.

I have watched the change in my own county (Lanarkshire) and there it is very marked. Two years ago, though I am a trusted and favorite servant of the men, and they would not like to do anything that would seem to injure or offend me, I remember that in our conferences the vast majority of the delegates were fight-to-the-finish and knock-out-blow men. I have watched the change carefully, and I venture to say that the question of the earliest possible

peace by negotiation, without annexation or indemnity, would be carried in Lanarkshire almost to a man. There is certainly a strong feeling in the districts of the county and in the conferences where the branch delegates meet against any more men being taken from the mines. The feeling is that peace could be secured if the British government were anxious to bring about an early settlement of the war.

The first cause of this change has been a natural one. We have been three and a half years in the most terrible war ever seen. Every village has its widows and orphans,—and mothers who have lost their sons. There is undoubtedly a war weariness.

Then the greed of the capitalist class and the profiteers has been another fruitful cause for bringing the people to look for peace. And the hideous mistakes which have undoubtedly been made, the blunders by some of our higher commands which have meant the useless slaughter of so many of the rank and file—Gallipoli, Mesopotamia and the latest at Cambrai—have added to the causes. These have all tended to make people tired of the thing; the food shortage, women and children standing in queues have added to it.

But probably the chief cause of the change which has taken place in the minds of our people has been that they have come to find out through recent revelations in Russia that to a very great extent we were misled at the outbreak of the war, that we have not been in it solely because Belgium was invaded, but that there are many other factors. Our capitalist classes and great armament firms and the jingo imperialists with their greed for new lands to exploit and develop—a greed common to Russia, Germany, Austria, Italy, France and ourselves—they were all in it—were desirous of laying their hands on the possessions of other more primitive peoples. When you recall how Russia and ourselves divided Persia, how Germany wished for Bagdad and we sought to prevent it—out, all of us, for mineral resources and oil—those were the real causes. And there is now an extraordinary number of our workpeople that are reading those facts and spreading them among their fellows. Our people, in growing numbers, have come to the conclusion that so far as the working people of Germany are concerned they are pretty much the same as ourselves, and there is no real cause for war between us. I must admit that to me it has been rather amazing that all the efforts of the jingo imperialistic press to get up a bitter hatred against the German and Austrian people amongst the workers of this country have utterly failed. There is a hatred of the Junker and military class of Germany, and there is a growing bitterness against the same class in our own country. Our people to a very great extent believed that the very strength of the German military machine was proof that she was preparing for years for an attack on her near neighbors. But now, from the information that has leaked out, our people are realizing that Germany's great preparations may have been caused by her fear that combinations and preparations outside her own borders made it inevitable that she should prepare for a com-



bined attack. The difficulty has been that up to the present time the governments of the opposing nations have managed to make their own peoples believe that they are fighting a defensive war and not one of aggression. That is the reason why working-class opinion has not been more strongly expressed. If we can prove to the German people that the democracy of this country is not out to smash Germany as a nation and cut off Germany from free commerce with the rest of the world—if we can prove that we are out to rebuild the world nationally and internationally on lines of brotherhood and lasting peace—if we can prove to them that our ultimate aims are in keeping with the proposals of the best of the Russian revolutionists, for the final establishment of the coöperative commonwealth, and the rights of the people of all the nations to govern themselves in their own way, I have great hope of a strong and hearty response from the German people. If they did not respond, I at least should be sadly disappointed and should, I think, have to change absolutely my views of them.

Once we get our allies to accept labor's war aims (or peace aims, as I prefer to call them) we must manage to put them before the representatives of the German and Austrian democracy. If we then get an authoritative statement, representative of the views of the German socialists and trade unionists, that they are not prepared to enter into negotiations, but are prepared to stand behind their government and military machine until the Allies are conquered and military victory secured for Germany, then I feel sure there would be a strong and almost a united movement amongst the people of this country, that we must fight on and use all the powers we possess in what would then be a defensive war against unreasonable and outrageous opponents.

Smillie's interpretation of the swing to the left, as he saw it in the industrial field, was matched by Ramsay MacDonald's in the political field. In an interview at Nottingham (January, 1918), MacDonald said:

The first thing is for the democracies to recognise that the war is a political event, that its causes cannot be removed by militarism in any shape or form—that a peace upon victory may only accentuate the differences and jealousies and the sensitiveness from which the war sprang. Therefore, it is the duty of the democracies to ask each other directly, what it is that went wrong with Europe before 1914. What have the democracies to offer to solve that problem? When they approach the war in that way, several things are quite evident. The first thing is that the governments apart from the peoples can't settle anything. . . .

After three years, the Labour Party has begun to see that that is the situation. At its two first annual conferences after the war, it decided by a huge majority, against the Independent Labour Party's advice, to take its share in the government. It then believed that to

support the government was to support the nation. It has now come to see that these two things are not the same, and at Nottingham it declined to pass a resolution in favor of its members remaining in the government,<sup>1</sup> but decided when the question was raised to make no pronouncement on the subject. The explanation is that it is developing a policy of its own, and it has made a first attempt to embody it in its war aims memorandum. . . .

When the Russian Revolution broke out, the reactionary mind of the Cabinet stood revealed in the half-hearted declaration made by Mr. Bonar Law, in the House of Commons, when he was forced to welcome the new government. Just so, it had been shown a few weeks before the revolution by the selection of Lord Milner to go to Petrograd on a special mission, when his entire lack of understanding of the popular movement that then had almost come to a head was shown by his support of Czardom.

To relieve the situation, thus destroyed, the government, without consulting British labor, selected a deputation to go to the Soviets. Professedly, it was a deputation of British labor, and, though the two labor leaders, O'Grady and Thorne, held positions in trade unionism, their qualifications for this mission were that they were blindly pro-government and made speeches on the most approved jingo lines. This deputation alienated the Soviets and left matters still worse.

Meanwhile, Mr. Henderson, the labor member of the War Cabinet, was also sent out and after a bad start began to take in the situation; but this only brought him into conflict with his cabinet colleagues at home, and shortly after his return he was forced to resign.

I know, as a matter of fact, that when Kerensky became the head of the Russian government he looked upon Mr. Lloyd George as his greatest friend, and I know, also, as a matter of fact, that as the months went by this faith evaporated. The great shock came with Stockholm. Kerensky never could understand why a democratic government could refuse to allow leaders of public opinion known to be honest and responsible to confer together. But when not only passports were refused to the representatives of British labor (to French and American, as well), but when Kerensky's known views in favor of Stockholm were contorted until they appeared to be antagonistic to the conference, Kerensky felt himself deserted. This series of events explains how confidence went by the board.

What I have said about the working class movement generally, I can say with still more force regarding my own constituency. Of course, when war broke the floodgates of anger and misrepresentation were opened on every one who took my position—had there been an election I should have lost my seat. I had three meetings broken up. In every case it was by a handful of organized people or by soldiers sent down by the Canadian pay-office in London. In

<sup>1</sup> It declined also to pass one calling them out, as likely to interfere with the prosecution of the war. (See page 45.)

one or two other instances when attempts were made to break up a meeting, the interruptors were ejected and government pro-war meetings broken up in return. I have had votes of confidence in me passed by every labor political organization in the constituency. Last Sunday, in Leicester, 6,000 people tried to come into a hall that held 2,000. This can be tested in another way: when the war broke out the membership of the Leicester Independent Labour Party was 650; now it has 2,200.

At the outset of the war, Ramsay MacDonald, then leader of the parliamentary labor group, staked his career on opposing Britain's entry into the war, attacking Grey's handling of foreign policy. John Burns, liberal-labor, like John Morley, an uncompromising liberal, dropped out of the government and of public life, on the same issue, and it looked as if MacDonald would experience the same fate. He was the object of unstinted and personal abuse. Henderson and other pro-war labor leaders came to the front, entered the government, stood for conscription and the other war policies, and helped Lloyd George in back-firing the revolutionary outburst in the congeries of ship-building and engineering works on the Clyde.

Throughout the earlier war years, MacDonald, because of his immense personal popularity, had been retained as treasurer of the Labour Party. He was renominated at Nottingham by nineteen labor unions, national and local, nine labor councils, and twenty-six local labor parties, committees and leagues, with no competing nominations whatever. But for more than the first half of the war his stand on the war issues, along with that of Philip Snowden, W. C. Anderson, F. W. Jowett and others, made these Independent Labour Party leaders seemingly almost as hopeless a minority in the Labour Party itself as they were in Parliament. MacDonald, Snowden and Lansbury are always sure of a demonstrative welcome from a labor audience. This is because they have carried on a lonely fight, and the Briton loves a game fighter, and because they have suffered in the cause of labor. But their more extreme views were not the views of the central majority group. Clynes, Thomas and Henderson won, when it came to votes and policy. The heart of labor was moved to these minority leaders of the left, while the head of labor refused to be convinced by the whole of their peace policy.

At the parting of the ways in August, 1917, the government labor faction led by Barnes and Roberts on the extreme right, and the extreme left of the I. L. P. led by Snowden, broke with the clear majority. But the power of party regularity, stronger even in labor politics than out, held them all in line, and the great center

massed behind the new tactics. Picture the line-up in American football. The backs shifted their tactics from the right end to between tackle and guard on the left. Thus by the close of 1917, the radicals gave fire and urgency to the new formation. The more conservative leaders still stood to the positions taken for three years, but many of them put their weight into the international program which the rank and file had laid hold of with a fervor which can only be compared with the feel of a labor group in the midst of a great strike.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NOTTINGHAM MEETING

QUICKENED by these developments, the British Labour Party went into annual session at Nottingham on January 23, 1918.

In a way, the Nottingham meeting originated nothing, brought nothing to a head. It merely affirmed the war aims which the two great British labor formations had agreed to in December, and which were to receive the sanction of Allied labor and socialist groups at the London conference in February [page 67]. Its plans for party reorganization, which had engrossed much of the time of the executive in recent months in anticipation of a general election, were held over until a special convention, also in February [page 105]. The tentative draft of its political platform, *Labour and the New Social Order*,<sup>1</sup> in a sense recapitulated the resolutions on internal policy adopted at the preceding annual session at Manchester. This was presented at Nottingham, not for adoption, but for reference to the constituent organizations in advance of a party conference in June [page 125].

Nevertheless, the Nottingham meeting gathered up all these strands into the cordage of its organized purpose and easily may come to be looked back upon as the outstanding labor gathering of the war in England. Some of its characteristics may well be set down here, as a cross section, if you will, of the British labor movement as a whole, master type of the uncounted, lesser meetings which led up to it, meetings of local and national unions, meetings of city and district federations. The delegates responded to spirited idealism from the speakers' platform. Again and again, some fiery radical from a back row would stir them into cheers. They responded less exuberantly, perhaps, but none the less just as spontaneously to homely challenges to fair play and to common sense. They threw open their doors to the representative of the Russian Bolsheviks and acclaimed the revolution; heard him rail at the "moderates," and, "moderates" themselves, nine-tenths of them, the delegates went on about their solid business in a solid way.

As a political convention, the thing which most impressed the American observer was the pains taken to provide for the deliberate

<sup>1</sup> Appendix IV.



consideration of policy. Under the rules every constituent organization had been obliged to forward to headquarters the resolutions it had to offer. All these had been sent out from headquarters to all the constituent organizations, so that both the resolutions thus offered and amendments thereto by other labor bodies were in hand in advance of the convention itself. The whole batch was classified, published in a forty-four page agenda and distributed at the first session. Representatives of such constituent organizations as had offered resolutions or amendments on any one subject, on the Ministry of Health, for example, or on the Soldiers' Charter, were asked to meet together in committee and endeavor to reach a joint draft. This in turn was printed forthwith and distributed to the delegates on the day for discussion of the subject. As already noted, the proposal for party reorganization was put over for a full month to give the constituent organizations time to debate it; the draft of the party program, for six months. In the current temper of the public toward queues outside the bakers' shops and meat markets, there was naturally bitter attack upon the government's handling of the food question, both in resolutions sent in and on the floor. But when J. R. Clynes, M.P., the labor member of the food administration, turned the tables, charged the unions with failing to coöperate in the local councils and put it up to them to work out a better scheme, he carried his audience with him.

Thus, all through the conference, sympathy for the oppressed of all nations and "grousing" against abuses at home were somehow or other, in true British psychology, consistent parts of a matter-of-fact grappling with practical things. The old watch-cries against capitalistic excesses had their customary echoes, yet the impression abided that here was developing something different both from rigid continental socialism and from the old trade unionism—something organic, national, British.

Indeed, the pre-war preachers of class hatred were conspicuous by their absence. The old-line Socialists in England had, in truth, been split by the great war into two groups, both of them comparatively small in numbers.

One group, the British Socialist Party, was fairly analogous in its direct opposition to the war to the stand taken by the American Socialist Party at St. Louis, just prior to our entry into the war. Its offices were raided by the government in January, and literature was confiscated that it had planned to distribute at the Nottingham meeting of the Labour Party. The other group, including some of the most extreme antagonists of the social order, merely crossed off "class" and wrote in "race" in the matter of their feel-



ings and anathemas and became readily enough a race-hatred, jingo section—the National Socialist Party—which, unlike the Labour Party, made no distinction between the German government and the German people. Its resolution declaring against any international conference “so long as the Germans occupy the territories they have seized and carry on their campaign of murder, outrage and piracy,” was heavily defeated at an inter-Allied conference in London on August 21, 1917. Its position was fairly analogous to that assumed by the American Federation of Labor once the United States itself became a belligerent.

In contrast, there was a very evident resurgence of feeling of working class brotherhood at Nottingham, and the fraternal delegates from Allied countries were made to feel by the applause which followed their speeches that the things in common were bigger than the things in difference.

More, the delegates began with singing Connell’s familiar “Red Flag,” which was distributed by *The Herald*. They did not balk nor turn a hair at the second stanza, which runs:

Look round—the Frenchman loves its blaze;  
The sturdy German chants in praise;  
In Moscow’s vaults its hymns are sung;  
Chicago swells the surging throng.

They sang it with the unction of a Progressive Party rally singing “Onward, Christian Soldiers,” but with this difference: they knew the words, and with one accord they gave the full-throated chorus for a seventh and last time at its close, singing it standing, heads up, in a great rolling bass:

Then raise the scarlet standard high!  
Within its shade we’ll live or die;  
Tho’ cowards flinch and traitors sneer,  
We’ll keep the red flag flying here.

From the gallery, before they had sat down, the call came for three cheers for the Russian revolution. They were given. Three cheers for the Austrian working class strike (then on). They were given. Three cheers for peace. Given with three times the volume of the others. A further call from the gallery for three “boos” for the labor “comb-out” raised more of a laugh than a cheer from the assembly.

As they sat down, the observer endeavored to size up these people who had been singing socialist songs and cheering peace in wartime. This was not what New Yorkers call a “Cooper Union

crowd." A day or so later at the headquarter's hotel, one member of the government labor delegation that was later sent to America pointed with a flip of his thumb at a party of long-haired, thin-cheeked agitators at a nearby table; there was a girl with them with bobbed hair and a socialist minister in black. "And they talk of that kind being the government, eh?" he scoffed. But this hall-full of labor delegates were predominantly of another sort, with wrists as thick as his own, and with sons, like his, in the trenches. It was made up largely of men forty years old or older. There were a dozen bald heads in the first five rows, for example, and as many polls of gray hair—perhaps a third of the fifty men who sat in them. And speaker after speaker who got up in the course of the three days' proceedings came to mind a few days later when one of the leading English economists said in a matter-of-fact way that there were in the Labour Party more men of capacity and experience, fitting them for responsibility and leadership in seeing England through the reconstruction period, than in either the coalition government or the Liberal Party.

At the Nottingham meeting, for the first time, the labor movement clearly demarked itself from the coalition government, as a party of opposition if events so developed, but rather, for the present and for the future, as a party of affirmative proposal. Its *Labour and the New Social Order*<sup>1</sup> was its charter for the reconstruction period; its *Labour War Aims*<sup>2</sup> its international program. Eight labor leaders were members of the Lloyd George ministry; Barnes a member of the War Cabinet. But while the vote of the conference was against demanding their withdrawal on questions of policy (Henderson in person leading the opposition to the demand, on the ground that it might embarrass the government in the prosecution of the war), there was no hiding the satisfaction in the corridors over trouble two of them were having in their constituencies, and there was general approval of Henderson's statement that never again would he be a member of a government in which labor was not in a majority.

At the Nottingham meeting, also, the swing of the labor movement toward the "left" in the matter of foreign policy, as the outcome of the three war years, stood out as an accomplished fact.

The underlying situation was the subject of various interpretations. Nottingham, in January, 1918, the week of the meeting, presented the customary look of an old industrial town, a textile center superimposed upon a mining district. There were few young men abroad. Working girls streamed to the mills in the mornings,

<sup>1</sup> Appendix IV.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix II.

young girls in numbers which indicated that they must have been recruited from other communities.

At night there were cheap shows a-plenty. A war loan campaign with its big bulletin boards created more of a stir than the labor meeting. It brought crowds of girls and middle-aged folk to the public square at noon, very different from the omnipresent khaki clad youth of central London; drab crowds, lit up only here and there by the occasional uniforms of men on leave, by the over-all blue and bright red ties of convalescent soldiers, and by picturesque window washers with their ladders; girls, these, in khaki pantaloons, who seemed to enjoy the glances that followed them as they threaded from one sidewalk group to another. Agents of the British Workers' League passed out sheets among them denouncing the British Labour Party—and at the other extreme, at the conference hall, other agents passed out copies of *The Herald*, challenging the government on the issue of the secret treaties and giving news of railway unions whose officers had refused to go on the government sight-seeing junkets to the front,—of Irish developments,—of the mistreatment of conscientious objectors,—of local labor demonstrations at a dozen points fanning strikes to force peace negotiations—copies, also, of Sylvia Pankhurst's *Dreadnought*, which apparently was at one with the Bolsheviks in its program for immediate industrial action to stop the war.

The local Nottingham newspapers interspersed their war bulletins with customary local happenings—from church activities to murder mysteries. Here could be learned the participation of certain of the labor leaders in outside meetings—from Purdy at a patriotic rally and Henderson at a temperance gathering to Smillie at a miners' meeting and MacDonald at a gathering of the local I. L. P. They gave up columns to the labor meetings, colored after their bent, and their reporters seemed, if anything, impressed with two facts more than others—that here was a national meeting which the town dignitaries had not been asked to open formally, and one which was entirely free so far as the galleries went, without ticket or privilege, to whoever came. One of the papers voiced the condemnation of the Tory press:

The German of to-day still stands out as the most fiendish creature upon earth, and the German socialist is just as bad as the man who is not a socialist. In Russia a gang of socialist ruffians have, for the moment, obtained power, and they are murdering and plundering every one who stands in the way when they get the chance. This is exactly what they did in Paris many years ago. Socialist methods there, as elsewhere, were methods of murder and outrage, backed up by lying on one side, and by unlimited profession of fine

motives on the other. And to-day we have the curious spectacle of British and foreign socialists gathered in this city to propound afresh their soul-destroying principles. The most striking thing about the actions of these people is their amazing effrontery and impudence. They profess to speak for the people of England. They profess to be able to stop the war. They claim to know more about it than any one else, and they misrepresent notorious facts in the most flagrant manner. The real fact is, of course, that they are oratorical windbags, without sense of knowledge, who have permitted themselves to be fooled into the acceptance of ideas that are false from beginning to ending, and they are permitting themselves to be fooled, also, by abler and less scrupulous men into playing the German game. For the time being socialists have ruined Russia, and seem determined to drench that unhappy country in the blood of its own people.

Russian socialists will not fight Germany, but they have no hesitation in turning machine guns upon honest and honorable Russian people, or in hiring assassins to murder Russian patriots. English socialists have not gone so far as this as yet, but it is only necessary to read reports of some of the speeches delivered in Nottingham yesterday to see that English socialists are traveling in the same direction as their Russian fellows. They have only to travel a little further on the same road to be ready to crush every person who disagrees with them without mercy. And what have socialists to offer us in exchange for the conditions they wish to destroy? Nothing but a German victory in the war, and a dead world when the war is ended.

A note of serious apprehension was struck that week by the *New Statesman*, the Fabian review, pro-war from the beginning and strongly committed to the war-aims labor program. The delegates were full of enthusiasm and hope, it said, for the general election that must follow the passage into law of the representation-of-the-people bill:

But over them all lay the shadow, not only of war, but of possible impending national calamity. A large number of these delegates from the mine and the railway, the shipyard and the forge, together with the officials of the trades unions in which the four million organized workmen are enrolled, brought with them to Nottingham the news of industrial unrest, of social discontent (acute to the bursting point), of the rank and file locally taking momentous decisions into their own hands, of the very serious possibility of sudden and spontaneous industrial disturbance. These men are, save for a relatively insignificant minority, not "pacifists." They have just declared, as their own "War Aims," terms which the Prime Minister found no great difficulty in substantially adopting as those of the Allied Powers. The discussions at the conference showed no weakening on these terms, and revealed, in fact, only a confirmation of the desire of



British Labor to stand by the national cause as British Labor has defined it. But the delegates made no concealment of their apprehensions that the grave popular discontent with the proceedings of Mr. Lloyd George's government—with its continued failure to assure to the people their daily rations, with its unexplained hesitancy in enforcing any real equality of sacrifice among rich and poor, with the industrial policy of the Ministry of Munitions, with the imperious tone of the director of national service, with the government's breaches of faith—might any day burst into a flame which the industrial leaders and officials would be unable to repress. That such an outburst of popular discontent with what is regarded as a blundering and partial administration might precipitate what would be essentially a class struggle, in which forces of repression and violence would be evoked, was only part of the calamity that was feared. It is due to these workmen to record that their greatest concern was as to the possibly disastrous effect of such a struggle upon the national cause.

A different face on the situation, little clouded by apprehension, was put by such spokesmen for the "left" as MacDonald and Smillie; rather they saw it overspread by the flush of a mounting working class purpose, long espoused by them when espousal meant obloquy, but now released by the very circumstances which in mid-winter were affecting the temper of all England. Only as that purpose was inhibited or thwarted did they see cause for apprehension or condemnation; only then, as they saw it, would those circumstances make for national disintegration rather than for a democratic determinism.

The president of the Nottingham conference was W. Frank Purdy, of the Shipconstructors and Shipwrights Association. In the course of his presidential address, he said:

Do the peace negotiations between Russia and the central empires show that Germany is willing to agree to the formula of "no annexations and no indemnities"? The military party in Germany have again assumed the ascendancy. Why? Look at the war map of Europe, and that will supply the reason. The Germans hold more territory of the allies in 1917 than they did in 1915. While Germany still occupies these territories, a peace by negotiation would be interpreted by her as a victory for herself and her allies and would fasten militarism more strongly on the people of Germany and more strongly on the people of the British empire and the whole world. It might bring peace; but it would be a drawn and inconclusive peace and would leave future generations exposed to a renewal of this terrible carnage. If Germany and her allies are not willing to declare that they accept the principles which our government and the President of the United States have now published to the world, then we must fight on. No other course is left open to us, if we

value our honor as a nation and our pledged word to Belgium, Serbia and France. We owe it as a duty to those who have made the supreme sacrifice, and to those who have been disabled in the war, to carry on until a clean peace is secured which will enable the peoples of the world to live in security.

The tank which was touring the English provincial towns in the interest of war bonds, was in Nottingham the week of the conference, and President Purdy was a speaker at one of the noon-day meetings. He stood at one end of the new working majority, Smillie and MacDonald at the other. So far had the pendulum swung that the I. L. P. resolution on the war, which would have been downed at the annual convention a year before at Manchester, had sufficient votes to carry it at Nottingham. It was shelved for the sake of unity with the Trades Union Congress on the resolutions subsequently adopted, but as evidence of the trend of feeling of the rank and file, it was of significance. It read:

That in the opinion of this conference the war marks the breakdown of the old method of diplomacy which settled the international relations of the peoples without consulting, or even informing them; it declares that in the past the failure has not been with soldiers, but with statesmen, who have used victories to impose terms of peace which left suspicion, hate and resentment behind, which were followed by military alliances and armaments, and which violated the principles of self-government in order to satisfy military demands and imperialist appetites; it therefore calls upon the government, if the sacrifices of the war have not been in vain, to provide for the direct representation of the organized democracy in every conference which discusses the conditions of peace, to reject war aims which give the war the character of an imperialist venture, and to use its influence and authority in every possible way to remove the causes of war; to this end, the conference declares that no obstacle should be put in the way of responsible representatives of labor conferring together with a view to arriving at such an understanding upon the problems of Europe, as will receive the coöperative support of all the democracies, without which there can be no lasting peace.

It was Arthur Henderson who served as the link holding together the various elements in the new working majority. The swing toward the left would have gone on without him. As a member of the War Cabinet, he was losing his grip on the labor movement; his dismissal by the government reinstated him; and he had the adroitness to make the most of it tactically, the keenness to sense the shift in sentiment, the commonality to share in it, and the statesmanship to help turn the unrest and mass movement of the rank and file into a constructive program.



Our first impression of him was unfavorable. This was at the Labour Party Headquarters at 1 Victoria Street, before the Nottingham conference, when he responded to an inquiry with a bit of a formal stump speech, such as he must have given a hundred times. But on the platform of the Nottingham meeting he won entire respect. He represented the Iron-founders Society as a trade unionist; had long been a member of Parliament. He is in the fifties and, with his long frock coat, his neatly slicked hair, the worn but firm marking of his face, he has not a few of the marks of the manual worker who has forged to the front either in business or public office, in church ministry or in labor leadership. Henderson has figured in the last three. He is a rare handler of men, with an old parliamentarian's trick of declaring in vehement speech some conservative course. He came out of every tilt on the floor of the convention on top, including one with no less formidable an opponent than John Hodge of the Iron, Steel and Kindred Trades Association, in which the latter publicly apologized. It was the same when the attack veered from the extreme right to the extreme left. An English social worker described him as a development over any English labor leader in the past—in the fact that he had the sagacity to surround himself with a group of men of parts, both from the ranks of labor and from the professions, upon whom he drew for ideas and counsel. Henderson's own contributions to the social thinking and clear utterance that was going forward were by no means the least of the group, but it was as an organizer that his powers of leadership stood out, in welding an as yet invulnerable labor group and steering it successfully away from quicksands and against the ill winds of some of the shrewdest and most powerful elements in English public life. The measure of his success at Nottingham was the passage of the resolutions already agreed upon with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress. These not only sanctioned the "war aims," and banked up united British labor behind them, but wrote an enacting clause after them, in the decision to go ahead with the procedure of inter-allied and international conferences.

Under the caption "Peace," the resolutions read:

That this Conference representing the organizations affiliated to the Labour Party—

- (a) Welcomes the statements as to War Aims made by the British Prime Minister and President Wilson, in so far as they are in harmony with the War Aims of the British Labor Movement, and make for an honorable and Democratic Peace;
- (b) Presses the Allied Governments to formulate and publish

at the earliest possible moment a joint statement of their War Aims in harmony with the above;

- (c) Approves the arrangements made for the holding of a further conference in London on the 20th February of the Labour and Socialist Parties of the Allied nations on the basis of the War Aims of British Labor with the view of arriving at a general agreement among such Parties;
- (d) Calls upon the working class organization of the Central Powers to declare their War Aims and to influence their Governments to make statements of their War Aims in order that the world may see how far the declaration of all the Powers provide a basis for a negotiated and lasting Peace, and
- (e) Assuming that a general agreement can be arrived at by the labor and socialist parties of the Allied nations directs that their several governments should be then at once urged to allow facilities for attendance at an International Congress in some neutral state, preferably Switzerland, at which organized working class opinion of all the countries may be represented, in order that nothing may be left undone to bring into harmony the desires of the working classes of all the belligerents.

That a copy be forwarded to the Prime Minister.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NEW ISSUE AND ITS ENGINEERS

ENOUGH has been said to bring out with clearness that the British labor offensive was not to be mistaken for a propaganda movement rallied behind a few watch cries and recruited up from a handful of men to a mass agitation. If we are seeking a comparison in current American history, to what had taken place in the British Labour Party, it would be to imagine that the insurgent movement in the Republican Party had found the national leaders swinging with it in 1912, or had succeeded in shifting control from such stand-patters as Taft, Root and Cannon to Roosevelt, Johnson and the progressives; or to recall the new and progressive tilt to the balance of power in the Democratic organization which came that year with the triumph of the Wilson Democrats at Baltimore. There was something tidal at work in American political life. But these alignments were not at a time of such transcendent national crisis, forcing men inexorably back to the bedrock of their make-up for choices, nor were they concerned so closely with the things which affect the individual in the everyday stuff of life and labor.

The emergence of the new leadership might be disposed of off-hand as the recourse of a few disgruntled labor politicians despoiled of office and anxious not to return to the bench. It might be discounted as the stampeding of the sober mass of labor by a group of hotheads, the old leaders going with the crowd lest their places be taken from them. These things might have entered in, but as explanations they were altogether too fine-spun.

The upward thrust of the new labor motivation had been a matter of growth within a great social organism, the membership of which had gone through a searching common experience and come out feeling the same way. In later chapters we shall press our exploration back of the sphere of war relations to that of domestic politics, and again back of the sphere of domestic politics to that of the workaday life—revealing ever deeper reaches of experience, an ever swelling volume of common feeling. The engineers of the new offensive had been party to this experience, had shared in this feeling, and this had come to be as true of the labor “center” as of

the "left." It is on the new majority that we can now fix attention, on the men who for two years have guided developments, if we would get close to the realities.

The swing was toward the left—not to it.

There has been no end of confusion and distortion as to the personnel of the British labor offensive. It has been associated by some with advocacy of a patched up peace that would have meant knuckling in to German militarism. Now, the man who drafted the war aims memorandum was Sidney Webb, who from the beginning had been backing up the war in the *New Statesman*. Americans will remember a member of the British mission which visited this country in the early months of the war. He was called by a New York banker the largest calibered labor man he had ever met. This was J. H. Thomas. He was to be found at Nottingham, at the head of the delegation of the National Union of Railwaymen. He was chairman of one of the chief committees at the subsequent inter-Allied meeting. In each of the great British labor gatherings of the last two years,—as we have seen at London and Birmingham, Blackpool and Derby,—he has been in a sense the floor leader of that central group which, with a steadfast following behind them, have held the new majority intact and converted the swing toward the left into a new dynamic, cohering and not disrupting the forces of labor. He has been close to Henderson, who quit the government because, in his words at Blackpool, he had "refused to do what I never will do, namely, desert the people who sent me into the government," and to Clynes, who coolly told the delegates at Nottingham that he would quit the party if they forced a premature issue with the government, which, in the view of these leaders, might embarrass the nation in the active prosecution of the war. The war aims had been put out by the new working majority in which, as we have seen, these three and their kind struck hands with such men as Ramsay MacDonald and Robert Smillie, who had stood out for working class negotiations from the first year of the war. The issue was not pacifism, but imperialism, and the new working majority offered itself as a nucleus around which the democratic forces of England might unite. Reviewing Henderson's new book, "The Aims of Labour," Sidney Webb wrote in *The New Statesman*:

... It is sometimes forgotten how considerable was the effect upon the spiritual course of the war which followed Mr. Henderson's resignation from the Government. The people of this country have always from the first moment of the war had only one object, a people's peace; but there is no doubt that as the exigencies of war gradually caused all control of policy to be surrendered into the hands



of governments, a feeling of helplessness, of inability to affect policy, settled upon labor and the peoples in Western Europe. Mr. Henderson's resignation dissipated in this country that feeling of helplessness and canalized once more the desires and determination of labor to control policy and accept only a people's peace.

As a check and confirmation both of our impressions as visiting journalists and of the *ex parte* statements of the labor men themselves, it will serve the purposes of this interpretation to quote a keen English observer, interviewed just before the Nottingham convention. A man of large independent means, he could not be charged with class bias; a university man, he was conscious of those larger implications of the English birthright that must not be sacrificed for to-day's pottage; an indefatigable worker in the war service of the nation, he was not of the sort to give aid or comfort to the enemy. As he saw it, British labor opinion was crystallizing about four or five main propositions:

1. For an unimperialistic peace. Their demand that the government commit itself unreservedly to such a policy was back of the recent pronouncements and pressure upon Lloyd George. Labor, he believed, would back up the war unreservedly so long as Germany failed to meet the Allies on this footing.

2. For participation of the people in foreign affairs. They felt that the old scheme of things in which they had no say, and the general muddle of secret diplomacy, had let them in for the present war. This had bred a determination that this should not happen again. They believed that the government had mishandled the Russian situation; they desired to take a hand, to find out about it, and to reach the working class opinion of other countries.

3. For disarmament; to get the burden of militarism off the backs of the workers.

4. For democratization of industry; they wanted a direct say over the conditions and affairs of work; and more, to participate themselves hereafter in the management of industry.

5. For a league of nations.

The insight and precision of these generalizations our further inquiries tended only to substantiate; a better telegraphic summary of the major trends of the British labor movement could scarcely be written than the five propositions as they lay in our informant's mind. The particularity of his information was shown when we asked him to specify why labor felt the government had mishandled the Russian situation in 1917. He grouped points which in their reaction upon working class opinion both in England and in Russia were, he said, now more and more recognized as blunders:



*Blunder 1.* The statements of Lord Milner when in Russia, in the last days of the old régime, supporting the Czar's government and making the revolutionists feel that England was against them.

*Blunder 2.* The statement of a member of the ministry in Parliament after the revolution broke out, eulogizing the Czar's government as an Ally.

*Blunder 3.* The refusal to let English labor participate in the Stockholm conference. A statement was given out which indicated that the Kerensky government was opposed to the meeting, without letting it be known that this expression was from the Russian Embassy in London, and not from Kerensky. When this reached Russia, it not only had a bad effect on Kerensky but undermined his position. Henderson's resignation confirmed the feeling among English labor on this point.

*Blunder 4.* Acquiescence by the government in the refusal of Havelock Wilson and the Sailors' Union to transport Ramsay MacDonald to Russia. MacDonald had great influence in foreign labor circles. He was whole-heartedly for Kerensky, against a separate peace, etc. He would have unquestionably fortified the provisional government.

*Blunder 5.* The failure to carry out an inter-Allied government conference and meet the Russians half way in the matter of war aims. The revolution had made any earlier understandings between the Allies, to the mind of the Russian people, a compact with the discredited régime of the Czar. In failing to carry through an official inter-Allied conference restating the purposes of the war, and in failing to let English labor participate in the Stockholm conference, Great Britain was acting in line with positions taken by France and Italy. Lloyd George had been, it was thought, favorably disposed toward such fresh action and England, as labor saw it, should have asserted her position.

*Blunder 6.* The failure to allay the mistrust by labor of the men surrounding Lloyd George—Milner, the man generally credited with getting England into the Boer War mess; Prussian in temperament and training; Carson, the aggravating delayer of Irish settlement; hated throughout the north of England; Curzon, who, as viceroy, had set India at heads and points;—that is, in labor's view, imperialists who had messed up British relations with South Africa, India and Ireland.

It may well be asked how far such delicate questions reached down to the average man in the form of gripping issues: but to see that they were bone and sinew of the protestantism of the British labor leadership, one had only to mark their recurrence in labor press and speeches. Believing that such cabinet members were the last men to deal in the spirit of English democracy either with revolution abroad (in Germany no less than in Russia), or with democratic strivings at home, the moderate central leaders were

confronted with the problem of organizing sentiment in such a way that, without weakening the war as a defensive measure against Prussian autocracy, they might carry overseas, as an alternative projection of foreign policy, those democratic fires which were kindled in the earliest history of English institutions and which have found new torch-bearers with each new age.

As a problem of organization, the first objective was to muster the full strength of British labor and those who would bank up behind it. Here the British Labour Party offered a natural base of operations, including in its membership both socialists with their kindling visions and trade unionists with their untapped strength; ready, also, to throw open its doors to professional people, to coöperators, to farmers, to women—to the common people of the nation. All but simultaneously came the awakening as we have seen of the older, larger, labor body in the industrial sphere—the Trades Union Congress; and at each point the Labour Party had been content to go at such pace as would find the twain shoulder to shoulder.

The second objective was, on the basis of this united British movement and its program, to muster the full strength of Allied labor. On the continent, in contrast to the English situation, the most prominent groups are socialist, but the re-creation of the old Socialist International Bureau was put aside and a broadened conference called, trade union and socialist alike, but designed to build on the dominant working class formations in each nation, in an effort to achieve that unity which had escaped them in the more loosely organized Inter-Allied conference in London, in August, 1917. The effect of this decision on the make up of the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference at London in February, 1918, was several-fold.

With respect to British trade union bodies, it left out the General Federation of Trade Unions which originally grew out of a strike insurance fund created by the British Trades Union Congress and now numbered some 800,000 members, as against over four million in the Congress. Many of its affiliated unions were members of the latter body, so that its distinctive membership was under 100,000. On the other hand, the textile workers and miners, for example, two of the strongest national groups, did not belong to the General Federation. In 1917, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the executive of the British Labour Party broke up a joint committee representing these two organizations together with the Federation, and reformed the committee, excluding the Federation.

With respect to minor British socialist bodies, the decision was

equally drastic. At pre-war international socialist congresses, the 120 British delegates had been allotted so that the Labour Party sent 60, the Independent Labour Party 25, the British Socialist Party 25 and the Fabian Society 6. At London, British representation from the political field was confined to the Labour Party, and although four members of the smaller, more radical Independent Labour Party were included in the Labour Party delegation, they refused to attend on that basis. Ramsay MacDonald, a member of the I. L. P. executive, participated, however, as treasurer of the Labour Party. Neither minority organization, the General Federation of Trade Unions on the extreme right nor the I. L. P. on the extreme left, was happy at this turn of affairs.

With respect to outside delegations, the effect of the decision was to omit representation of neutrals.

So much for delimitations; on the positive side the effect of the decision was to throw open the doors on equal footing in joint session with the socialists, to the distinctly trade union formations, such as the British Trades Union Congress, the French *Confédération Générale du Travail* and the American Federation of Labor. With respect to the United States, the British leaders compromised their procedure by not inviting to the London meeting the American Socialist Party as the leading political labor body in the United States; doing so on the understanding that, otherwise, the American Federation of Labor would not participate; and doing so, only to have the Federation go unrepresented after all.

But the working class movement of the Allied European nations, socialist and labor alike, turned out in strength and achieved the sought-for unity.



**PART II**  
**THE WESTERN FRONT OF LABOR.**





## CHAPTER VIII

### THE INTER-ALLIED CONFERENCE AT LONDON

ON the opening day of the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London (February 20, 1918), J. W. Ogden, chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the British Trades Union Congress, presided. The gathering, he said, was unique in the history of the labor movement—the first occasion on which the workers had unitedly evinced a determination to take a dominating part in the issues of war and peace; and for justification:

Our initial declaration that, whatever may have been the causes of the outbreak of the war, it is clear that the peoples of Europe who are necessarily the chief sufferers from its horrors had themselves no hand in it, is a truth so insistent and indisputable that we are justified in putting the strongest possible emphasis on the statement.

The London *Times* in its news report put the case from another and less sympathetic angle:

Whatever else may be uncertain, there can be no doubt that those who have called to-day's meeting are determined to strain every nerve in the effort to secure a settlement of the war by the intervention of what are, after all, only sections of the nations.

This London conference of February, 1918, according to the official statement issued at its closing session, consisted of the following delegations:

The members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and of the National Executive of the Labour Party; representatives of the Italian Socialist Union and the Italian Official Socialists; representatives of the Confédération Général du Travail and of the French Socialist Party; and representatives of the Belgian Labour Party. There were also present consultative delegates from South Africa, Rumania, and the South Slav organizations.

Messages were read from organizations in New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, Rumania and from the Social Revolutionary Party in Russia, endorsing the British labor memorandum on war aims.

Camille Huysmans (secretary of the International Socialist Bureau) read a telegram sent to the French Socialist Party by Rous-

sanoff, Soukhomline, and Erlich, on behalf of the Menshevik section of the Russian Social Democratic Party and the Russian Social Revolutionary Party, intimating that these sections of the Russian Socialist movement had appointed delegates to attend the Inter-Allied Conference. The Bolshevik government, however, had refused passports to the delegations, and the message recorded their emphatic protest against this measure.

Incidentally, the concluding sentence supplied an interesting footnote to the attempt, currently made in the United States, to identify the proceedings at London with the Bolshevik and the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. There were present at London, however, representatives of the Italian Official Socialists, whose national officers, Lazzari and Bombacci, were in March, 1918, sentenced to prison for issuing circulars in November, December and January. In these they had urged, according to the Rome dispatches, "every possible opposition to war," and upheld "their Russian comrades." Their defence was that they considered themselves bound by the International Socialist Congress at Basel in 1912, and "that it was their duty to remain apart from the war and do everything they could to secure peace." At London, also, the French minority socialists had equal representation with the French majority (numerically the names had become a misfit) in the united French delegation; but the Kienthalians (the extreme left) were not represented.

But to set up the inference that the London conference was only a new front for the extremists is as beside the mark as were the efforts to characterize the suffrage movement in its earlier stages by the positions taken on marriage by some of the more pronounced feminists; or to identify the Lincoln Republicans with the abolitionists in the campaign of eighteen-sixty. The engineers of the British labor offensive set the gauge of their movement broad enough to draw into their affirmative program and procedure, elements which until then had been largely negative in their attitude towards the war, together with the larger groups which had been consistently for the war. To do less than that would have been to defeat the very purpose of the movement, namely, to afford a constructive sluice-way for all the springs of working-class unrest and aspiration among the western democracies and turn them into a constructive force. It was this affirmative program and procedure which, as such, united them and became the object of their support.

That labor should seek unity in things essential, in things not essential, liberty; is one of the most characteristic of Henderson's phrases. It was the spirit of the conference leadership—letting the defeatists, on the one extreme, and the chauvinists, on the other,

go their ways apart, while proceeding deliberately with the majority program, backed up by the center and the strong intermediate elements toward right and left. The London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, commenting on the success of the February conference to get together, where that of August had failed, pointed out that platform and procedure were the result of a "distinct will for unity." Early in the meeting, Canepa for the Italian reformist group reported that they were ready to agree with the British memorandum with very slight amendments and that they had had conferences with the Jugo-Slavs as a result of which a considerable measure of agreement had been disclosed—a statement foreshadowing the later official approachment between the Italian government and the Jugo-Slavs. Albert Thomas, who as minister of munitions earlier in the war is credited with having done for France what Lloyd George did for England in speeding up the production of war material, toured England following the London conference, speaking on platforms with members of the cabinet and others in behalf of Anglo-French understanding and unity. He stood for the same thing in the conference of the workers. At the opening session he reported that never had there been such a "healthy and unanimous collaboration between the Socialist Party and the Federation of Labor in France as now." "The French Socialist Party in their National Council had registered agreement in such a majority that it might be described as practically unanimous." And at the closing luncheon, the *London Times* quoted him as saying that

the conference had done what the governments and the old traditional diplomacy had refused to do. It had never hesitated to face difficulties and differences, even on delicate questions. It had been able to deal with the question of the colonies, although that vitally affected certain British interests. The delegates had also been able to discuss frankly and fully the war aims of Italy. They had not hesitated, as governments had done, to support the claims of oppressed nationalities, and they had given a definite reply to the appeal of the southern Slavs. The governments were concerning themselves with propaganda in Germany. Lord Northcliffe had been placed in charge of this work here. If he was to be well advised he would not rely exclusively on the help of business men, scientists, or newspaper men, but would turn to the representatives of the working classes. Then he would receive sound advice on the best method of speaking to the German people.

In a sense, the most notable advance of the conference in achieving a common procedure was the action of the Belgians. According to the official report, Vandervelde stated:

During the discussions at the international commission he had received a letter from the Belgian Labor Party in which it was stated that they had reconsidered the matter and consulted with responsible leading members of the Belgian labor movement, and that instead of the unanimity that previously existed, there was a majority and a minority. The minority was completely in favor of giving freedom of action to their three official representatives. The majority said that until the German socialists definitely declared that they were ready to bring pressure on their government to agree to conditions of a democratic peace they thought that an international conference would be practically impossible and morally futile. That opinion coincided with the views of the three Belgian delegates.

But at the present time they might reasonably discuss the question whether the German socialists could be brought into harmony with them on the lines of a democratic peace. That question had been partly answered by a section of the German socialist movement—the Independent Socialist Party. But when the views of the majority of the German socialists were known, the Belgian socialists would be able to judge of the opportuneness of a general conference.

From the beginning of the war he had admitted that the German socialists were in a difficult position, and they had to make certain allowances for them. Although the grounds of their grievances against them were serious, he recognized that, placed between Czarism and the western democracies, their situation was perplexing. The German socialists believed then that the danger was Czarist Russia. They could not make that plea now. Germany was surrounded by none but democracies, free peoples who were fighting to resist imperialism, to maintain freedom, and the spirit and forms of democratic government.

To-day, since the Russian revolution, the choice for the Germans lay between a democratic peace that would not threaten them and a peace dictated by their general staff, which would threaten them and the rest of the world with an unbearable servitude. They had before them a unique opportunity to confess their socialist faith, atone for their past failures, and secure, with freedom for other countries, their own freedom from militaristic and imperialistic oppression.

At the outset of the London conference, five commissions were created, and it is significant that in every case the chairmanships of these important working committees went to the conservatives. Renaudel, the French majority socialist who had recently been exposing German spy activities in the industrial districts of France, was named as head of the commission to report on the League of Nations; Sidney Webb as head of the territorial commission; J. H. Thomas as head of the economic commission; Albert Thomas as head of the committee on publicity and drafting; and Henderson as



head of the committee on the advisability and conditions of an international conference.<sup>1</sup>

As in all democratic movements, it was possible that at some future stage the center of gravity might swing still further to the left on the war issue. But the course of military events on both fronts, in which the ruthless power and intention of the German imperialists showed itself in such stark contrast to the ability of the German socialists to counter it, had no other result, in the succeeding months, than to stiffen the conviction of the conference leadership in standing out for the unremitting prosecution of the war as the resistance of the democracies to the transcendent threat of Prussian militarism. At the same time they awaited those crystallizations in working-class purpose in Germany which, as events have proved, they firmly believed their joint unimperialistic overtures—like the manganese that is thrown from the outside into the molten mass of the converter in a steel mill—might yet help to bring into being.

The London conference made the convincing manifestation of that change on the part of the German labor and socialist groups a prerequisite to any inter-belligerent meeting—the next objective in the British procedure to achieve unity. The controlling paragraphs in the war aims memorandum adopted at London read:

As an essential condition to an international conference, the commission is of the opinion that the organizers of the conference should satisfy themselves that all the organizations to be represented put in precise form, by a public declaration, their peace terms in conformity with the principles “no annexations or punitive indemnities, and the right of all peoples to self-determination,” and that they are working with all their power to obtain from their governments the necessary guarantees to apply those principles honestly and unreservedly to all questions to be dealt with at any official peace conference.

<sup>1</sup> The officers of the five commissions were:

League of Nations.—M. Renaudel (French Majority Socialist), Chm.; Ramsay MacDonald (British Labour Party), Sec’y.

Territorial Commission.—Sidney Webb (British Labour Party), Chm.; Jean Longuet (French Minority Socialist), Sec’y.

Economic Commission.—J. H. Thomas, M. P., Chm.

Publicity and Drafting Commission.—Albert Thomas (French Majority Socialist), Chm.; G. H. Stuart Bunning (British Trades Union Congress), Sec’y.

Advisability and Conditions of International Conference.—Arthur Henderson (British Labour Party), Chm.; M. de Brouckère (Belgian Socialist), Sec’y.

Albert Thomas later, at his request, was transferred to the territorial commission.

In view of the vital differences between the Allied countries and the Central Powers, the commission is of opinion that it is highly desirable that the conference should be used to provide an opportunity for the delegates from the respective countries now in a state of war to make a full and frank statement of their present position and future intentions and to endeavor by mutual agreement to arrange a program of action for a speedy and democratic peace. . . .

The Belgian delegation, which for the first time came into an Inter-Allied conference without a mandate to oppose an international gathering, carried conviction as to this conservative procedure. Moreover, the London conference did not attempt to reestablish the International Socialist Bureau with its old scheme of representation, but decided that any international conference,

held during the period of hostilities, should be organized by a committee whose impartiality cannot be questioned. It should be held in a neutral country, under such conditions as would inspire confidence; and the conference should be fully representative of all the labor and socialist movements in all the belligerent countries accepting the conditions under which the conference is convoked.

The fact that the Italian reformists and the French majority groups—the pro-war wings of the socialist parties in the Latin countries which had shared in the war ministries no less than the Belgian socialists—were for this procedure is evidence that they had confidence in the safeguards outlined. We must weigh that against snap judgments on this side of the water that the Germans would have dominated “every feature of the program.”

This London meeting was in early February. In the succeeding months the burden upon General Foch as supreme commander of Allied and American forces in France was to engineer such swift, united resistance to the tremendous German drive as to leave it a crumpled and disastrous failure. Beneath his immediate commission observers were quick to see in this move, prompted by the crisis, a further step toward organizing that mutual force to check and thwart aggression which had been advocated as the essential arm of a league of nations.

The Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference was a manifestation of another essential factor—a first international joining of hands of great social groups that found common cause in the principles which they held should enter into the constitution and legislation of such a league.

## CHAPTER IX

### ALLIED LABOR'S WAR AIMS

A POINT has been reached where we can turn from the steps taken in engineering the program upon which British labor had united as never before the whole working class movement among the Allies, and resolve it into its elements. As Vandervelde said, the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference [London, February 20-24, 1918] was charged with working out a platform and a procedure.

The basis of that platform was the war aims memorandum<sup>1</sup> adopted in December by the British labor movement, but the Inter-Allied document<sup>2</sup> transcended all earlier outgivings in its approach to the problems of international relations, in the sequence with which it marshaled the principles of the workers' statecraft and in their application in turn, to the war, to the political ordering of the world, to territorial questions, to economic relations and to the problems of peace, of restoration and reparation.

"A device of the capitalist interests," read the Inter-Allied labor memorandum, would be "to pretend that the treaty of peace need concern itself only with the cessation of the struggle of the armed forces and with any necessary territorial adjustments." It reiterated that "a victory for German imperialism would be the defeat and destruction of democracy and liberty in Europe," but it envisaged only less as a defeat any return to the *status quo ante* in terms of a return to competing imperialisms,—to a crushing load of competitive armaments on the backs of the workers,—to a world order of subject races and subjugated masses,—to the "war system" as the world knew it prior to 1914, with its "old yearnings after domination" which "corrupted the aspirations of nationalities and brought Europe to a condition of anarchy and disorder, which have led men to-day to the present catastrophe." "Of all the conditions of peace," it said, "none is so important to the peoples of the world as that there should be henceforth on earth no more war." It held up the vision of a new world which, to the workers, made the

<sup>1</sup> Appendix I.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix II.

struggle worth its cost. It brought down to earth and the common people thereof each of the great principles of settlement.

Thus, the Inter-Allied labor memorandum grounded its general proposals for a league of nations on the principle of self-government, as expressed in the demand for self-determination. It was for making the league inclusive of all belligerents and of every independent state, but it was for making the "complete democratization" of any nation the qualification for its participation therein. By the same principle, the emphasis put by the diplomats upon international courts was thrown by the workers (without abandoning the tribunals) upon an international parliament. By so much, they held, would the common people of the world become sovereign, and look to their security in their own kind, as against the "arbitrary powers who, until now, have assumed the right of choosing between peace and war."

Labor's memorandum called for the use by the nations of "any and every means at their disposal, either economic or military," in making common cause against any state refusing to submit to an arbitration award or attempting to break the covenant of peace. But it called also for "the prohibition of great armaments on land and sea, and for the common limitation of the existing armaments by which all the people are burdened," and it did so in order to prepare "for the concerted abolition of compulsory military service in all countries." Thus it put in terms of war and its heavy levies upon the working years and the workers' lives, the old American rallying cry that "taxation without representation is tyranny."

It was under the control of a League of Nations, so conditioned, that the workers were for putting "the consultation of peoples for purposes of self-determination"; it was by the establishment of such a system of laws and guarantees that they saw removed "the last excuse for those strategic protections which nations hitherto have felt bound to require." They expressed agreement with the four propositions put forward by President Wilson in his message of February 11, 1918, and as against forcible annexation or conquest, they grounded their territorial propositions on the right of each people to determine their lives. "Neither destiny of race nor identity of language," so often a "cloak for aggression," but the "desire of the people concerned" was their touchstone. The memorandum called specifically—

For the reparation by the German government of the wrong admittedly done Belgium; full payment for damage done and the restoration of Belgium as an independent sovereign state.

For the disannexation of Alsace-Lorraine as a matter of right and as precedent to a plebiscite, devised by the League of Nations, such



as should "settle forever" the future of the provinces, and finally remove from all Europe a quarrel which has imposed so heavy a burden upon it.

For the evacuation of Serbia, Montenegro, Rumania, Albania and all the Balkan territories occupied by force; redress and reparation for all violations; each people to be given full liberty to settle its own destiny; and the Balkan states encouraged to federate for the settlement of common problems of customs and ports, autonomy, and the liberties of minorities.

For the support of the claims of Italians, hitherto left outside Italian boundaries for strategic reasons, to be united with Italy, and for full liberty of local self-government for such Slavs as remain in Italian territory, such Italians as remain on the East shores of the Adriatic.

For the reconstitution of Poland in unity and independence with free access to the sea.

For the abandonment by Germany of any scheme of annexation, open or disguised, of Livonia, Courland and Lithuania.

For according, under the rules of the League of Nations, national independence to such of the peoples of Austro-Hungary as demand it and their freedom to substitute a federation of Danubian states for the Empire. [The conference did "not propose as a war aim," its dismemberment or its deprivation of economic access to the sea, but could not admit that the claims of the Czecho-Slovaks and Jugo-Slavs "must be regarded merely as questions for internal decision."]

For the freedom of Palestine from "oppressive government by the Turk" and the formation of a free state under international guarantee to which the Jewish people may return to work out their own salvation free from interference.

For the freeing of Armenia, Mesopotamia and Arabia from the "tyranny of the Sultan and his pashas," and, if their peoples are not able to settle their own destinies, for their administration under an international commission subject to the League of Nations.

For the permanent neutralization of the Dardanelles.

For the special consideration at the Peace Conference of the question of colonies taken by conquest; for "economic equality in such territories for the people of all nations," for the "concession of administrative autonomy for all groups of people that attain a certain degree of civilization, and for all others a progressive participation in local government," and for tropical Africa a "system of control established by agreement under the League of Nations," which would "take into account the wishes of the peoples," would safeguard the native tribes in the ownership of the soil, and "devote all revenues to the well-being and development of the colonies themselves."

In other ways, the memorandum grounded its economic propositions on the principle of stripping international relations of privilege, economic friction and oppression. It ranged labor



Against punitive indemnities.

Against the economic boycott of any country.

Against the capitalistic exploitation or militarization of the natives of any colony or dependency.

Against the "alliance between the military imperialists and fiscal protectionists in any country whatsoever" as "a serious danger to the prosperity of the masses of the people" and "a grave menace to peace."

Constructively, labor expressed itself:

For the freedom of "the main lines of marine connection" without hindrance to vessels of all nations under the League.

For the "open door without hostile discrimination against foreign countries."

For the conservation by each nation, of "its own supply of food-stuffs and raw materials, for its own people" along with the "development of its resources for the benefit of the world."

For (in view of the world-wide shortages caused by the war) a systematic arrangement, on an international basis, for the allocation and conveyance of the available exportable surpluses "to the different countries, in proportion not to their purchasing powers, but to their several pressing needs," coupled with government control, within each country, in order to "secure their appropriation not in a competitive market mainly to the richer classes in proportion to their means but systematically to meet the most urgent needs of the whole community."

For (in view of the discharge of millions of munition workers and the demobilization of millions of soldiers) government projects to prevent the flinging of "a large part of the wage-earning population into all the miseries of unemployment," "as much the result of government neglect as is any epidemic disease."

For international agreement "for the enforcement in all countries of the legislation on factory conditions, a maximum eight-hour day, the prevention of 'sweating' and unhealthy trades, necessary to protect the workers against exploitation and oppression, and the prohibition of night work by women and children."

For the restoration of devastated areas, as "one of the most imperative duties of all countries immediately peace is declared," for the "assessment and distribution of the compensation so far as contributed by any international fund under the direction of an international commission," and for a restoration not limited "to compensation for public buildings, capitalist undertakings and material property proved to be destroyed or damaged," but "extended to setting up the wage earners and peasants themselves in homes and employment."

For the setting up of a court of claims and accusations which should investigate allegations of "cruelty, oppression, violence and theft against individual victims, for which no justification can be

found in the ordinary usages of war"; and should summon persons and governments before it and award damages. Particular attention was drawn to the loss of life and property of merchant seamen and other non-combatants, including women and children, resulting from this inhuman conduct.

Thus, at every point, labor was for giving human content to the "safety" of democracy after the war. It was not a dynastic map, nor a destiny map, nor a trade map, but a peoples' map that it proposed should be engrossed at the Peace Conference.

Repeatedly, in the course of the war—whether before America's entrance, at the time of the President's first request to the Allies for a statement of war aims, or in 1918 in the exchanges as to Japanese intervention in Siberia—Americans who have access to the British press have caught the note of comprehension and democratic sympathy with the American viewpoint in such journals as the *Manchester Guardian*. Here is what the *Manchester Guardian* said of the war aims of the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference of February, 1918:

. . . Above all and through all runs the demand, not as a sequel in the conclusion of peace, but as an essential part of the terms of peace, for the establishment of an effective League of Nations, for disarmament, for the substitution of international law for force, and, as a corollary of these things, for open diplomacy, the publication of all treaties, the effective control of foreign affairs by popularly elected bodies. It follows, of course, that if governments are to rest upon consent and foreign affairs are to be controlled by popularly elected bodies, there will be no room left for the autocracies, and that conclusion is plainly drawn. It is indeed designed that the whole of the belligerent nations shall form part of the League of Nations, and no conditions of entry are in terms imposed. But no nation could enter a league with such functions and such a constitution which had not pretty effectively democratized itself—more effectively indeed, as regards control of foreign affairs, than has our own country up to the present moment. The first object of such a league is declared to be the one laid down by President Wilson for his own people, "to make the world safe for democracy," and it is to a democratic world, and a democratic world only, that the conference looks for the mighty step forward in the adjustment of human affairs which is necessary as the sequel to this war if worse, and much worse, is not to befall us in the days to come.

This is the answer of democracy to autocracy, to-day so seemingly triumphant, and it is surely a notable one. It is, be it observed, the answer not of British democracy alone, but of the labor forces of the Allied nations. The governments have so far failed to draw up a common programme of war aims; the conference has done it for them. All the world can now know the policy of Allied

labor, and labor among the central powers may usefully ponder it. What will it say? That we have yet to learn, and nothing must stand in the way of our learning it. For in truth it is on the accord of the democracies far more than on that of their governments for the time being that the future depends. Indeed, it may yet be that only through the effective accord of the peoples can peace be reached at all. It is for the peoples, therefore, to assert themselves, our own people, the French and Italian peoples, the German and Austrian peoples. What hope, will it be said, is there of that? How is a triumphant militarism, at this very moment rich with spoil, to be crushed and broken? Perhaps the triumph is pretty far from being as complete as it seems; perhaps even its leaders have something more than a suspicion that their power rests on no very stable base, and that unless they in their turn can offer their people something more than conquest, can at least assure them peace, there may be limits to the endurance of the most patient. But in order that the peoples in those countries may have some stable ground to go upon, in order that they may know what for them peace would mean, it is essential that the terms should be clearly stated, and stated collectively. That is what the inter-Allied conference has done so far as labor is concerned. It is well done, and the Allied governments would be well advised speedily to follow suit. When it is fully known to the German people that peace means not subjection but liberty, there is no saying what useful transformations may not follow.

Now it may be said that the *Manchester Guardian* is a liberal paper, which held a critical attitude towards not a few of the activities of the British War Cabinet. Let us turn, therefore, to the editorial page of the London *Times*, the chief of the Northcliffe press. On February 25, the *Times* published the war-aims memorandum of the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in full, and described the memorandum as in the main "sound and sensible." Under the heading, A Democratic Challenge, the *Times* said in its leading editorial:

The organizers of the Allied Labour-Socialist Conference of last week have every right to congratulate themselves on the result. In the first place they secured agreement, which is in itself no small triumph; and, in the second place, they did so, not by watering down the British labor memorandum to a few colorless generalities, but rather by amplifying and strengthening it. The result is a very long, detailed and definite statement of war aims and peace terms. The weakest part is the preamble, taken from a resolution adopted at a socialist conference held three years ago, and implying that the war is due to general causes and especially to the "capitalist" order of society. . . .

Readers who approve of some parts of the statement and object to others, must remember that it is addressed primarily to the labor

socialists of enemy countries, and that it speaks a language to which they are accustomed. It is not the voice of the nation; it represents a point of view, and if it occasionally ascends into a somewhat nebulous atmosphere, that does not weaken the firm and positive stand taken on essential matters. As a whole, it offers far more ground for satisfaction than for objection.

The differences between the new international statement and the British memorandum adopted in December are considerable and important. As we have said, the earlier draft has been amplified and strengthened in detail and its logical sequence has been much improved. The first important difference is the prominent place assigned to the project of a League of Nations. That is a project which has been put forward by President Wilson and by many other persons, but it has not, so far as we know, been previously laid down so explicitly and in so much detail. It is postulated as the future guardian of democracy and the key to the problem of preventing war forever. Further, it is to be the agency by which the principle of self-determination for nations is to be realized. It is forcibly urged that the right of self-determination would be valueless if it were at the mercy of fresh violation, and therefore that it must be protected by a super-national authority, which only the proposed league can supply. But, more than that, it is contended that the establishment of an effective super-national authority implies the complete democratization of all countries, with the abolition of autocratic powers and other features of the present or past politics of nations. It follows that if self-determination and the prevention of future wars depend on the establishment of a League of Nations wielding effective authority, and if this in turn involves complete democratization of the nations adhering to it, then it is evident that the first step towards the realization of the ideals set out is democratization. This means, when applied to the actual conditions before us, either that Germany must first be thoroughly democratized before any progress can be made, or that the League of Nations, formed without her, must be prepared to compel her compliance by force of arms. We agree. A League of Nations would be a farce with Germany as she is, ruled by a single will, cherishing boundless ambitions, restrained by no scruples, bound by no compact, owning no law but necessity, and armed to the teeth. . . .



## CHAPTER X

### TWO-EDGED: SWORD OR PLOUGHSHARE

TURN now, from platform to procedure. In the first place, Allied labor believed the principles in its platform were worth fighting for. That was the first edge of the labor blade. Against the Prussian embodiment of conquest, of punitive indemnities and subjugated peoples, they would have been found resisting with the last ounce of blood and brawn, had other elements in the community been willing to sacrifice the East for the West, and throw the war at cost of the principles for which they were fighting. In this sense, we have the paradox that by their peace aims, the workers made it essentially their war. In February, 1915, a conference of Socialist and Labour Parties of the Allied nations had recited the wrongs to Belgium and Poland and declared that "throughout all Europe from Alsace-Lorraine to the Balkans, those populations that have been annexed by force shall receive the right freely to dispose of themselves." Three years to a month later, the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London reaffirmed that labor was "inflexibly resolved to fight until victory is achieved to accomplish their task of liberation."

*Vorwärts* did not make the mistake of those reactionaries who attacked Henderson as a defeatist. *Vorwärts* charged that he "preaches the aim of reconciliation, but does so raising the fist of enduring readiness for war." Renaudel, the French majority leader, was quoted as saying in the spring of 1918 that it brooked little should Germany yield the provinces wrested from France in 1870 if half a dozen new Alsace-Lorraines were set up in the East. Said Vandervelde at London, in words which forecast the impending German drive:

We are meeting in very serious times. At the time this conference assembled, it was stated in the newspapers that all the forces of imperial Germany were to be thrown against Paris. On that very day we also learned that the Russian revolution, overcome by the weight of its own miseries, and its own mistakes, had resigned itself to the signing of peace with the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns. We cannot ignore what the Bolsheviks have done to discredit their own country and international socialism, but we must not for-



get, on the other hand, what the Russian revolution has done for internationalism and socialism. In the splendor of its first triumph, it proclaimed those principles which, adopted by President Wilson, will form the basis of the democratic peace of to-morrow.

But we have more to do than to congratulate ourselves on the achievement of the Russian revolution; we must also draw lessons from its failures. The great lesson is that democracy was committing an irretrievable mistake by throwing away its arms before imperialism had been defeated. Whilst holding the olive branch in one hand, we have to hold the sword in the other. We have been forced to take up the sword as the only means of defense. We must not forget that if we are able to assemble here, it is because the British navy holds the seas, and the millions of allied soldiers maintain the line. If the German offensive were to succeed the resolutions we pass would be mere "scraps of paper" and of no more value than the bank notes of the Russian state bank. If our soldiers are able to throw back the attack with which we are threatened, we shall have the glorious opportunity of taking a leading part in the effort that can then be made to attain a just and democratic peace.

To Vandervelde, beside him on the platform, Ramsay MacDonald said in his speech at Nottingham in January:

We can assure him that however we may differ in some things, there is no difference between him and us regarding national self-determination; no difference between him and us that Belgium must be free and independent. If we made peace to-day without that, peace would be false, and in two or three years militarism would raise its head more devilish than ever before.

This edge of the British-Allied labor blade was driven home in April, 1918, as part of the general marshaling of Allied arms to meet the shock of the German drive toward Amiens and Paris. The executive committee of the British Labour Party that month passed this resolution:

*Resolved*, That the National Executive of the Labour Party places on record its deep sense of gratitude for, and admiration of, the heroic resistance offered by our armies in the field to the terrible onslaughts of the enemy during the recent offensive. Such magnificent courage and resolution—so consistent with the best British traditions—imposes an imperative obligation upon all sections of the country to assist by their skill, energy or substance, to carry on the great work of liberation in which our armies are engaged in order that our joint efforts may eventually result in the final overthrow of militarism and secure for the world a lasting and democratic peace.

With the development of implements of warfare, from cross-bow to gunpowder, from gunpowder to high explosives, to airplanes

and submarines, it is not strange that modern labor should have set out to improve upon the ancient anvils on which swords were laboriously pounded into ploughshares, and to fashion an implement which could serve both purposes at once; two-edged: sword or ploughshare.

The Inter-Allied labor meeting in 1915 had resolved to resist any attempt to transform this defensive war into a war of conquest, which would only prepare fresh conflicts, create new grievances and subject various peoples more than ever to the double plague of armaments and wars.

In the three years intervening, the workers had marked the grasping of French imperialists after the left bank of the Rhine; they had learned of the claims of Italy for the East shore of the Adriatic, for Smyrna and what not; they had learned, through the Russian exposures, of the secret treaties for the parcelling out of the Turkish Empire, and underlined not only the booty for the Mediterranean Allies and the Czar, but those paragraphs where "Great Britain obtains"; they had seen the jingo press from Allied countries circulated in Germany by Pan-Germans, as part of the junker propaganda to convince the German people that theirs was a war against annihilation.

So in 1918 the Allied workers did more than reaffirm their resolve to resist the transformation of a defensive war into a war of conquest. They "condemned the aims of conquest of Italian imperialists," they "condemned the imperialist aims of governments and capitalists who would make of . . . territories now dominated by the Turkish hordes merely instruments either of exploitation or militarism"; they disclaimed any intention to "pursue the political and economic crushing of Germany"; they disclaimed as a war aim "dismemberment of Austria-Hungary or its deprivation of economic access to the sea"; declared against "all the projects now being prepared by imperialists and capitalists, not in any one country but in most countries," for an economic "war after the war." But they did more than resist and denounce; they came forward with a series of affirmative proposals, whose reasonableness and freedom from imperialistic taint they believed must awaken response from such chords of democratic feeling as might persist in Central Europe. They set out to press for a joint statement from the Allied governments to match the statement British labor had elicited from the Premier and to match the 14 points through which President Wilson had not only spoken for the United States, but voiced the democratic aspirations of inarticulate forces for democracy among all the Allies. More, pending such a joint

pronouncement on the part of the Allied governments, they forged their labor weapon to the same end, and in the British labor offensive, we had a two-edged implement whose blade clove at once for war and peace.

To labor's mind, the principles in their platform were not only worth fighting for; they were worth pressing home with all the moral and political force they could muster. By the issuance of the Inter-Allied platform they sought to turn the hard pan of German official control and reach the soil of working class opinion beneath. It was the proposal of an interbelligerent labor meeting, safeguarded, while the war was on, that was the ploughshare edge of their blade.

The *New Republic* in publishing the London memorandum in full as a supplement on March 23, 1918, put the tactic in a nutshell:

Just as the labor and socialist parties of the western Allies have succeeded, where their governments have failed, in reaching a common statement of war aims, so the labor and socialist parties of the whole world may reach a similar agreement in spite of the chasm which still divides the belligerent governments.

But here, again, we can turn to outside English witnesses of standing. At the opening of the London Conference (February, 1918) the London *Times* chronicled the British labor offensive in all but the same words as employed in Chapter II, which at the time they were published in *The Survey* (March 9, 1918) were denounced in some quarters in America as a perversion of the facts. *The Times* began:

The present conference of labor and Socialist parties representing the Allied countries is evidently guided by skilful hands. They have gone to work in a methodical and purposeful way, very different from the crude and impetuous attempt to hold a general international meeting at Stockholm last summer. It is clear now that if the meeting then proposed had been held it would have been a Babel of discordant voices expressing irreconcilable views in diverse tongues and with extreme heat. . . . The project fell through at the outset because no preliminary agreement could be reached in this country among the intended delegates. The problem of overcoming this initial difficulty has occupied the best heads among them during the ensuing six months, and substantial progress has been made along a very laborious road. . . .

Of the whole procedure, the *Manchester Guardian* of February 25 said:

It is a sound and practical program and it is to be hoped that none of the Allied governments will raise any objection to its being carried out. It ought, on the contrary, to be welcomed by all.

While the conference was on, the London *Daily News* held that

the importance of the agreement there is every prospect of attaining at the present conference can hardly be over-rated. . . .

There are certain services to the world which only democracy can render. No appeal, no warning, no menace from the British government, or the French, or even the American, will detach a single German democrat from his allegiance to the Kaiser. If German democracy is to be kept true, or made true, to democratic principle, it must be by the establishment of a frank understanding with the democracies of England and Italy and America and France. If Russia is to be saved even yet from the cataclysmic disasters that threaten her, it can only be as she establishes with western democracy relations she will never countenance with western governments.

In discussing the project of an international labor conference, the London *Times* called attention to points which "must be given consideration," such as that enemy labor might "return specious answers" which would have to be "carefully scrutinized before going further." Nonetheless, this is what *The Times* said of the procedure which was determined upon and which, if this British journal closely identified with the administration found worth fair discussion, would seem at least to have warranted a fair hearing from American labor bodies:

Let us, therefore, suppose again that the Allied labor declaration of war aims is brought to the notice of the corresponding bodies in the enemy countries. The first object is to extract an answer from them which will show their real position, and if that agrees in any measure with the Allied labor views, then to proceed further with negotiations and attempt the international meeting. The eventual object appears to be to convince the enemy labor representatives that they have been deceived by their own government and that no intention of crushing or ruining them is cherished on this side; that what we are fighting against is German "militarism" and the gospel of force which it represents.

That is a fair and proper object which has been pursued by President Wilson and others; and not only have the labor organizations a right to pursue it too, but they can in some respects do so more effectively than statesmen or governments. . . .

Arthur Henderson, in speaking at the closing luncheon at London, said:



In spite of cajolery and misrepresentation, we say to our critics: After nearly four years of ruthless slaughter and destruction, in which humanity is slowly bleeding to death, it is time that the military effort was seriously supplemented—not superseded or supplanted, but seriously supplemented—by the pressure of the moral and the political weapon. It appears to us that the interests of all the nations involved in the struggle and the interests of humanity as a whole render it imperative that the war should cease the moment the conditions of a world-peace are assured.

As I understand the position of Allied labor, it is this: We seek a victory; but we do not seek a victory of a militarist or diplomatic nature. We seek a triumph for great principles and noble ideals. We are not influenced by imperialist ambitions or selfish national interests. We seek a victory; but it must be a victory for international moral and spiritual forces, finding its expression in a peace based upon the inalienable rights of common humanity. By the acceptance of the amended war aims, the Inter-Allied Conference has declared that, whilst we are unprepared to continue the conflict for an imperialistic peace for the Allies, neither would we consent to the acceptance of terms which would mean a German militarist peace. We have made our declarations of policy in good faith, repudiating all deceit and cunning. We shall refuse to countenance any attempt by either group of belligerents to defeat the principles for which we stand. We shall oppose any unscrupulous application of these principles to any particular cases in which any country may be interested. We shall continue to press our case against all opposition, whether it be internal or external, in order that we may eventually secure that constructive, democratic peace so essential to social and economic progress the world over.

In order to secure such a peace we are ready to coöperate on the principles of conciliation with all elements, whether they be Allied, neutral, or amongst the belligerent peoples. All peoples we are prepared to coöperate with who are inspired by principles identical with those upon which our peace proposals are based. Doubtless we shall again be charged with pacifism, and told that we are playing the game of the enemy. Let me say emphatically that though we are not seeking exclusively a French peace, an Italian peace, or a British peace, we are all of us, I believe, much more strongly opposed to a German peace. Nor do we want "peace at any price."

We must do everything in our power to hold an international conference under proper conditions, and as speedily as circumstances will permit. We must use that international conference as an opportunity for removing every obstacle that stands in the way of an honorable, just, world-settlement.

One of the most consistent criticisms leveled at Allied diplomacy had been that of André Chéradame, who from an angle very different from that of labor, charged it with ignoring the social and



psychological factors in the common assault upon an enemy that has used both. Among national spokesmen, it remained for Woodrow Wilson to link military and political offensives. In a sense his state papers, after the United States entered the war, fall into two groups—those in which he made ringing call to arms against Prussian aggression, and those in which he set forth the principles which “would be our own in the final settlement.” To a remarkable degree the two were blended in his address at Baltimore in April, 1918, on the first anniversary of America’s entry into the war; and its two-edged blade afforded a master type of the new statesmanship. In this address he yielded no ground to those who had criticized his moral and political offensive. Still less did he yield ground to the German thrust at Amiens. Rather, he accepted the latter challenge and threw it back. In doing so, he made clear that instead of confusing the issue, his enunciation of the fourteen points and the four, and the other steps in his moral and political offensive, grounded as that was on his remarkable understanding of the psychology of democracy, had made the issue clear as never before.

As one edge of his blade, we find him throwing over the motivation of hate—that recourse of the German autocrats which had found an echo from not a few of our own lesser spokesmen. “I should be ashamed,” he said, “in the presence of affairs so grave, so fraught with the destinies of mankind throughout all the world, to speak with truculence, to use the weak language of hatred or vindictive purpose.” Rather, his was an appeal to reason. His basic confidence lay in the ability of thinking Americans to make up their minds. “The man who knows least,” he said, “can now see plainly how the cause of justice stands, and what imperishable thing he is asked to invest in.” He reviewed the exchanges which had helped bring this education about and, in doing so, reaffirmed the unimperialistic principles for which America stood—in a way which at the time may be said to have been an answer to such organs as the *Giornale d'Italia*, which had doggedly clung to the commitments by the Allies to Italy; and an answer to the *London Globe*, which before the ink was fairly dry on the statements put out by Premier Lloyd George and President Wilson at New Year’s, urged their recall on the ground, apparently, that German conquests in the East should be eyed for an eye with prospect of counter conquests.

As against those who thus pinned their faith on dark threats of punishment as means to weaken enemy resistance and to build up the fighting spirit at home, President Wilson reaffirmed his contrary principles and alternative procedure:

. . . I have sought to learn the objects Germany has in this war from the mouths of her own spokesmen, and to deal as frankly with them as I wished them to deal with me. . . .

We have ourselves proposed no injustice, no aggression. We are ready, whenever the final reckoning is made, to be just to the German people, deal fairly with the German power, as with all others. There can be no difference between peoples in the final judgment, if it is indeed to be a righteous judgment. To propose anything but justice, even-handed and dispassionate justice, to Germany at any time, whatever the outcome of the war, would be to renounce and dishonor our own cause, for we ask nothing that we are not willing to accord.

He went further and reopened the door which the German commanders in Russia clanged shut "when we proposed such a peace:"

For myself, I am ready, ready still, ready even now, to discuss a fair and just and honest peace at any time that it is sincerely purposed—a peace in which the strong and the weak shall fare alike.

Here, then, were the main elements in President Wilson's moral and political offensive. Here, also, they became basic elements in his military offensive, the other edge of his blade. And in making this clear he once more spoke over the heads of the German general staff to the civilians of the Central Empires at the same time that he mustered the American civilian soldiers afresh to their task:

It has been with this thought that I have sought to learn from those who spoke for Germany whether it was justice or dominion and the execution of their own will upon the other nations of the world that the German leaders were seeking. They have answered—answered in unmistakable terms. They have avowed that it was not justice, but dominion and the unhindered execution of their own will. The avowal has not come from Germany's statesmen. It has come from her military leaders, who are her real rulers.

How these "military masters" overrode the German civilian delegates at Brest-Litovsk, how in Russia, in Finland, in Ukraine and Rumania they sought to "impose their power and exploit everything for their own use and aggrandizement," how they would do the same thing on the western front if they had the chance, how they might be willing to promote a false peace in the West if they could have free hand in making the Slavic lands, the Baltic peninsula and Turkey "subject to their will and ambition, and build upon that dominion an empire of force upon which they fancy that

they can then erect an empire of gain and commercial supremacy," were set forth by President Wilson as so many elements in a program in which "our ideals of justice and humanity and liberty, the principle of free self-determination of nations, upon which all the modern world insists, can play no part."

That program once carried out, America and all who care or dare to stand with her must arm and prepare themselves to contest the mastery of the world—a mastery in which the rights of common men, the rights of women and of all who are weak, must for the time being be trodden under foot and disregarded and the old, age-long struggle for freedom and right begin again at its beginning.

And in conclusion he said:

. . . Germany has once more said that force, and force alone, shall decide whether justice and peace shall reign in the affairs of men, whether right as America conceives it or dominion as she conceives it shall determine the destinies of mankind. There is, therefore, but one response possible from us: Force, force to the utmost, force without stint or limit, the righteous and triumphant force which shall make right the law of the world and cast every selfish dominion down in the dust.

Operating in the workaday field, rather than in that of official statesmanship, British labor was employing a formula kindred to that of the American President. There has been a great deal of discussion of morale. Much of it has had that naïve ring to it with which some people discuss welfare work as a solution of the labor problem. British workers did not take stock in cigarettes or soup-kitchens or hate as a method of building up morale either among soldiers or citizens. They were out for justice—justice first of all in their own war aims. Rightly or wrongly, they believed that if (in 1917) the war aims given out in December had been given out in May, there would have been a good chance that the provisional government under Kerensky would not have gone down or the cave-in on the Russian front resulted. They believed that the same type of mind which fell short there and which expressed itself in the secret treaties would never weaken the bonds which held the German working people in leash to their overlords. "How," they asked, "are you to counter the German imperialists at home if Allied labor does not make clear, by forcing a united unimperialistic statement of war aims from the Allies, that the German working-classes will not be opening the way to the destruction of Germany if they revolt, or threaten to do so; how if Allied labor does not make clear that it can and will hold its governments to this

course; how if it does not endeavor to get these things across to the German socialists?"

In his Washington's Birthday address on February 22, 1918, Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, was quoted as saying:

Shall we meet in council with these men [German labor], gaining from us our confidence, swerving us from the path of duty, trying to influence us that the governments of these democracies are, after all, only capitalistic? I have said, and I say in the name of the American labor movement: "You can't talk peace with us now. Either you smash your autocracy, or, by the gods, we will smash it for you. Before you talk peace terms, get back from France, get back from Belgium, into Germany, and then we will talk peace."

This left the British labor leaders cold. They believed themselves at work on a procedure which would do more than swash-buckling to achieve the very ends Gompers desired. They understood the American feeling, as they went through it what seemed to them ages before. They were scarcely of a temper to wait inactive while American labor should go through a similar tuition. Their own experience with the grapples of government control in war-time had given them a notion of the Prussian hold upon the German workers. British labor was freer—and proposed to use its fuller measure of freedom so that the less free might act in turn. You heard among them little of atrocities linked with the civilian common soldiers who now made up the bulk of the German armies. That motive, fanned too hard earlier in the war, had burned itself out. They thought the men the British were fighting against were much like themselves, caught in the grip of war, neither fiends nor made of other clay. So long as the German workers were held by powers greater than themselves to an assault upon democracy and were thrown at the western workers, so long would these shoot and be shot.

The British was the antithesis of the Russian method of bringing about a change. They did not propose to down tools or down arms at home as the method of bringing the German workers around. They believed that the German armies would be in Paris and in London quick enough if the French and English workers downed tools or arms. The Russian developments confirmed them in this belief. But, on the other hand, they were equally of the belief that the English and French armies would make for Berlin if the German workers revolted. So, therefore, they were engaged in the slow process of forcing the Allied governments to come out singly and unitedly in a statement for an unimperialistic settle-



ment, in the process of showing that the Allied working classes had enough strength to hold them to it, and in the process of getting word of these things through to the German workers in a way which would carry conviction.

Their first objective was to get unanimity among the great British labor organizations. That was reached in December, 1917.

Their second objective was to get unanimity among the labor and socialist groups among the Allies. That was reached in February, 1918.

Their third objective was to promote the convincing espousal by the organized German workers of those principles of a people's peace they had made their own. On that hung their fourth objective—to get unanimity among the workers of all Europe on a charter of democracy embodying those principles which they might press as the basis for an enduring settlement of the war; a war which, because of those principles, they supported.

That was the British labor sword—or ploughshare, as you will.



## CHAPTER XI

### ANOTHER ENGLISH ROUND TABLE

RAMSAY MACDONALD was speaking. Before him was a great well of pipe smoke through which you could see, row upon row, the upturned faces of broad-cheeked British labor men. Above them in a horseshoe was a gallery of cheering spectators. He stood on a drop-balcony at the end, which was like the frog of the horse-shoe—at a narrow table at which sat a dozen men facing the body of the hall. There was the Belgian minister of *Intendence*; there was a former member of the British War Cabinet; there was the unrecognized ambassador of the latest Russian government; there were two members of the French parliament; and several times that number of English commoners. They were all labor men or socialists.

“See us here,” MacDonald was saying, and he brought down the house, “shoulder to shoulder; disagreeing; comrades in our disagreements. And when you think that the extension to this table by a few feet, the addition to these chairs by half a dozen, is all that it means to bring the International together, in the name of God, let us think of this.”

In these phrases, at the first evening meeting at Nottingham, he gave delegates to the Labour Party convention a picture which stuck in their minds—which was referred to again and again in the discussions of the next three days. He had taken his fellow members in the executive of the British Labour Party and the fraternal delegates sitting at the ‘speakers’ table beside them, and turned them into what the exhibit experts call a three-dimension piece. He visualized in the chairs, the table, the men beside it, something undreamed of in the older philosophies of war, but something cherished and familiar to the gospel of working class brotherhood, as spoken in a score of tongues since the days of Karl Marx. He visualized an international labor conference in the midst of war, threshing out their differences either to agreement or to a final unbridged cleavage; an international labor conference at the time of the settlement of the war, whether it were near or far, standing out for a workers’ peace.

“We do not want a peace celebrated by sobs,” he went on,

"but a peace with democratic songs, served by democratic effort, built up by democratic principles; a peace maintained by democratic vigilance. . . . It is your duty to speak to those silent to maintain silence no longer, to come together, to discuss and settle difficulties."

There were two vacant ends to that Nottingham table. The absentees at one end were, of course, any representatives of the workers of Germany and Austria; although in the course of the evening a young woman spoke for the rebel Czech element, and hailed the British workers' message to Russia as kindred to the yearnings of their "comrades in Bohemia." Incidentally she brought news of a resolution in favor of Czecho-Slovak independence adopted at a congress of all Czech deputies from Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, held at Prague in January, which had been entirely suppressed by the Austrian censor.

The absentees at the other end of the table were those of the United States. Just as the British delegates felt that war-time isolation and distance were factors which stood in the way of any approach to the working classes of the Central Empires, so they felt, a month later, that these same obstacles were factors in the absence of American labor alongside the Belgian, French, Italian and other Allied labor groups who made common cause with them at their London conference in February.

At that first evening at Nottingham it was the fraternal delegates who spoke, and what they said was current evidence as to the various angles from which the different Allied labor and socialist groups approached their common action.

The first speaker was Camille Huysmans, who represented another and earlier approach to the question of an international labor conference. Before the war he was secretary of the International Socialist Bureau at Brussels, and since, secretary of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee presided over by Hjalmar Branting (the Swedish Socialist leader), which had promoted the Stockholm conferences. Huysmans' arrival in England was noted in some of the London papers by the publication of paragraphs describing him as pro-German and saying that he had gotten out of occupied Belgium on a German pass. The fact that at Nottingham he was in informal and frequent conference with Emile Vandervelde, member of the Belgian ministry which is known to have turned down repeated overtures for a separate peace, was perhaps sufficient indication that, however much the two men had differed in policy, his sincerity commanded the respect of his fellow countrymen.

Huysmans brought the greetings of the organizing committee of the Stockholm conference project, from the Socialists of Den-

mark, Sweden, Norway and Holland and that part of the Russian social democracy which was associated with them. He is of the slender student type which we associate with what Englishmen call the "intellectuals" whether in socialist meetings or university halls. Above his glasses is a high, square forehead with black hair thrown back. A long, thin neck upholds his high-boned face. Even when, at the outset of his remarks, he raised a laugh by saying that he was especially happy to come from Stockholm because it was a "prohibited area," there was only a momentary relaxation of the sober tension of the man. "The fact that I am permitted to come to Great Britain," he went on, "is a mark of the confidence which your government has in me. I regret that your government has not so much confidence in you." In explaining the activities of the Stockholm committee he said (here and later, quotations are very largely from long hand notes):

My friends had the impression, and it was also the impression of a man who is a devoted friend of British democracy—M. Branting—that in the capitalist societies war organizations are like iron walls opposite each other, unable to crush one another, unable to have a real military result. If we had this conviction that militarism had no solution unaided in itself, then there was need of another way out. This conviction has been deepened by events. The German and Austrian armies from the east are now cast on the western front where the forces are, to a certain degree, again of the same strength.

We were of the opinion that peace, if it were to be what the workers want, ought to be prepared by Socialists and labor parties across the war, and drawn up in such a manner that it would endure in the years to come. This policy was not understood. I will not defend myself against what has been said in leaflets and in papers. According to some we were sold to William the Second, and according to others we were the tools of Poincaré. But the result of the contrary policy has been that Russia was pushed to the extreme left wing. We thought that if in the Entente countries there was a clear statement of war aims and a general agreement, labor at last in Germany and Austria would be compelled to act along the same lines as ourselves.

I know that the moderate statements of the American and English governments of late have made more impression on the people than the German and Austrian governments have acknowledged. My comrades charged me to explain these points and to say that we approve the tactics proposed by British labor.

In conclusion, Huysmans said:

You have a great responsibility. It depends upon you whether the International shall be the first bridge across the world; whether a

new International shall come into being, greater, stronger, representing all working classes, all peoples—an International which shall be across the world what your British Labour Party will be in your own country—the leading political power.

The conference had shown its catholicity by inviting two Russians—Litvinoff, the unrecognized Bolsheviki ambassador (later arrested by the British but let go in return for the release of British representatives in Russia), and Roubanovitch, the most important representative, then in Western Europe, of the old majority in the Constituent Assembly. Roubanovitch could not come, but the Bolsheviki had their spokesman—a stocky, heavy-set Russian Jew with the glasses of a student and the heavy jaw of a street speaker.

“I come before you no longer to protest against the friendship of your government with ours as in the past,” began Litvinoff, referring to nine years under the Czar’s régime he had spent in London as an exile. He went on:

Rather I stand here as representative of a government the like of which the world has never seen. For the first time in history the proletariat has achieved supreme power in one of the largest states in the world. I pray you, comrades, to disabuse yourselves of the notion spread by the capitalist press that the Bolsheviki have usurped power like a band of thugs. In spite of sabotage by officials of the old government, they have carried through a revolution in the most approved way; and if they were a band of adventurers they would have been thrown out long ago.

The establishment of the socialist administration may seem to you miraculous in view of the economic backwardness of Russia. That has rather made it possible. The capitalist classes had not attained full power or sway over the minds of the working classes. That explains the hold of the socialist movement in 1905. It was suppressed, but lived. Nor did the war dampen the revolutionary spirit. On the contrary, the capitalist hunger after Constantinople and Armenia increased the hatred of the working classes and increased the revolutionary energy. Theirs was a revolution not only against the Czar and his régime, but against allied capitalists.

There was absolute silence among the upturned British faces before him, broken only now and then by hand-clapping here and there. “The Russian workers,” he went on, “wanted peace as well as freedom and social reform. The Russian workers revolted not only against the inexcusable conduct of the war, but against the war itself.” Here, at the end of each sentence, the crowd burst into cheers. He continued:

They revolted against the war by revolting against its authors and advocates. In the March revolution the power passed into the



hands of the working classes, but they allowed it to be held by the liberals. The Bolsheviki leaders were not in Russia. They were in Siberia, many of them. Others, like Lenine and Trotzky, were living abroad, unable to return owing to obstacles put in the way by the Entente governments. Therefore, the only leaders were the moderate socialists who openly advocated the cry of the people for peace, for no annexations, no indemnities and the right of self-determination. But they did not carry these things out.

So the masses came into the streets again. They had had an object lesson in depending upon moderate socialists. This resulted in putting new men into the cabinet, but these soon became the abject slaves of the liberals. The cry for peace became a mere phrase; a badly conceived offensive was attempted; the arrest of revolutionary leaders followed; the revolution began to fizzle out.

Again the masses came into the streets. If the revolution had continued to drift in the same direction it would have given rise to the restoration of the monarchy. The laboring classes turned their eyes to the revolutionary party which had from the first stood for the complete power of the soviets. On the night of November 7, the government under Kerensky was transferred to the Russian Congress of Soldiers' and Workers' Delegates.

Has the experiment of the Russian revolutionary people justified itself? I mention one word—Brest-Litovsk. There, in that little barrack town, greater and more dramatic history has been made in three weeks than in three and a half years of war.<sup>1</sup> The principles of no annexation and the right of the people to determine their lives have been asserted in such a way as to shatter the capitalist war. Even if peace does not result from the negotiations, a revolution in Germany—and let me hope somewhere else ["Say it again," came a cry from the gallery] becomes one of the immediate possibilities. We have placed the German people face to face with their governments. Either they must accept the democratic principle or continue war for territorial conquest. Will the German people accept that choice or spend themselves for their Junkers and capitalists to the end? I think there can only be one answer. Already we hear the rumble of the storm coming from Austria and Hungary.

But not only have the war aims of the Central Powers been exposed; the statesmen of the allied countries have been forced into the open, and surely these exposures must have their effect on the minds of the workers of the world. By the publication of their secret treaties the governments have been given warning that their peoples will not put up with mere machinations.

Internally, the land has been given to the peasants; factories and lands have been put in the hands of the workers; the apartments of the rich have been made to supply shelter for the homeless; local

<sup>1</sup> The negotiations at Brest-Litovsk dragged along till the first week in March, 1918; six weeks after this Nottingham meeting.



government has been put in the hands of the soviets; banking has been nationalized; the army has been democratized by establishing the principle of direct election of officers. The full right of self-determination has been granted to all nationalities.

For a space of three months that is not a bad record. It is true it has not been wholly carried out into practice in the face of capitalistic sabotage. It is also true that if reaction sets in these things will be swept away. Yet is it not true that the Bolsheviki have given a demonstration to the workers of the world?

The Russian people are fighting an unequal fight, against the imperialists of all nations. They have begun a work for general peace, which alone they cannot finish. They will fail if they have not the response of the workers of all countries—those of the Central Powers as well as the Allies. I can only say to British labor: Speed up your pace. I hope and trust that you will not allow thousands and millions more men to be sacrificed.

Thus the Maximalist ambassador was given a hearing; he was given applause. But his speech in a sense served to demark the Bolshevik program from that which the British and Allied speakers who followed him were engaged upon. They made it clear that neither in internal nor in international procedure did they see eye to eye with him. It was with other forces in the Russian political life that they were bound by the old ties; it was the Russian Minimalists who cabled acceptance of the war aims adopted at the London conference in February; and in June, it was the British Labour Party which gave the first hearing accorded Kerensky, following his escape from Russia.

The first of the allied speakers was Emile Vandervelde, chairman of the old International Socialist Bureau, a holder of various portfolios in the Belgian ministry and an indefatigable worker for a hundred measures to build up the efficiency and morale of the Belgian army. He is stout, dignified, middle-aged, with a close-cropped black beard and a black necktie over a white shirt. He spoke in French with a ring and modulation to his voice which had been lacking in the preceding speaker; with restraint and reserve power; a man who had argued in parliaments rather than on street corners. His emotion was less in the expression of his face than in the tone of his voice, which had a minor key and rose at one point to an impassioned appeal. How much was understood was problematical, but the spirit of the man won repeated applause.

His translator afforded a similar contrast—short, stocky, the university man in hale middle life. This was Sidney Webb, the Fabian historian of British trade unionism—heavy-moustached, eyebrowed and bearded, his dark hair shot with gray, contrasting with full-blooded, clean-shaven cheeks. He wore a black string

to his eye glasses and would have passed anywhere for a banker. Vandervelde said:

While listening to the Russian representative I could not help but think of the people of northern France and Belgium, of Serbia and the rest. I can understand the enthusiasm for peace in this fourth winter of war with privations and the wastage of youth. From the whole suffering mass of humanity goes up the cry for peace. ["Hear, hear," came from the hall.] The whole world asks for peace, but it asks—what peace? Shall it be a peace imposed upon us, or the peace we want—the peace of democracy? [Again the cry, "Hear, hear."] Peace without conquest is not necessarily peace without victory. In order to attain it democracy must win a double victory—against those who threaten us from abroad, and against those in our own country. The internal victory, which the Bolsheviki claim, was in no small measure due to those leaders of the revolution who preceded them. With us, this internal victory is in no small measure gained, due in the first place to the British proletariat, at whose instance a decisive and lucid reply was obtained from the prime minister of the greatest empire of the world, and found an echo three days later in the message of the president of the world's greatest republic. This memorable result will be definitely consolidated on that day when the entente governments confirm their unanimous desire in these respects by means of a collective declaration.

It was not enough for the workers of the Allied nations to be in agreement on formulas. They must be unanimous in making their program triumph by all possible means, and this was the great task which would be imposed upon the proletariat of democratic nations in the near future. The moment approached when in mutual agreement they must make a solemn appeal to the proletariat on the other side of the trenches, asking them if they were on the side of social democracy against their masters or with their masters against social democracy.

The future of the International depended upon the answer of the German proletariat and on them rested the possibility of common action against the autocracies of the mailed fist. Liebknecht had stood for these principles. The Belgian people had stood for them—and would remain so unflinchingly. With the aid of the social democracy of Germany, or without their aid, they were resolved to fight to the end for the people's rights.

There followed the representatives of the two wings of the Socialist Party in France—the majority represented by its leader, Pierre Renaudel, follower of Jaures. Tall, heavy-set, he used his arms freely, pounded the table, spoke with a rising inflection, every phrase of which was an appeal, every point swelling into a torrent

of words. What he said had also to be translated by Sidney Webb.

As he had listened to the Russian delegate, he said, he at first could not help feeling a certain divergence of thought between them. The workers of all countries saw on all hands ruin and mourning accumulating, but knew they could not get out of their troubles by good will alone. It was their will to establish the rights of the people, the government of the people by themselves. They were still facing the dilemma of how. After an entire month the Russian delegation had been unable to get a single word out of the German negotiators at Brest in favor of the principles laid down by the Russians. The German armies had put their hands on Lithuania, Courland. The Russians said they wanted to have the whole people of these provinces consulted. The Germans said no. And so long as they said no, the war must go on. Like Vandervelde, he could see no other way out—the German and Austrian people must do their duty and throw off militarism. The Russian revolution laid down principles which afforded a way out, but they must be given effect. General rights must be established on a proper basis through a league of nations and through disarmament. The various governments had come to support the principles that President Wilson had set forth. Thus the ideas had gone throughout the governments and peoples of the world. But upon the working classes of the world rested the responsibility to see to it that these principles were given effect. He did not want to speak of the ugly claim of the French imperialists for the left bank of the Rhine; the French Socialists had stood against it. But the same principle applied to Alsace-Lorraine. The question of the provinces taken from France could not be settled by force; it was not merely a territorial question, but a question of the reassertion of general rights. He contended that the people of Alsace-Lorraine should give their view, and that disannexation must precede a plebiscite.

Differences there were, he went on, but those differences could well be adjusted if submitted to the judgment of the world. Germany must submit disputed questions to that judgment. There and there only could true internationalism be grounded, on the lines of general rights and self-determination of the peoples concerned. This principle must not be a vase which could be shattered; it must be a living thing, and the working classes must make it so. When the French socialists were prevented by their government from going to Stockholm—if their government had not been blind!—that is the message they would have given.

Renaudel's address was broken by a burst of cheers. It had to do with the appearance of a well-recognized and popular figure

—the belated representative of the French minority—Jean Longuet—grandson of Karl Marx, born in London and educated there, who has spent his life in France. He is tall, spare, a bit stooped, with a long black coat and a bush of wavy black hair suggestive of the artist or the musician. He spoke in fluent English and his instant ability to get into close contacts with his listeners, their evident friendship of long standing, made altogether clear what the British workers were searching for when they passed resolutions the following day for some simple international tongue!

"This has been a year of great events," he said, "and the greatest of these has been the Russian revolution. It has been a year of trial, but a year which has given to the working class energy." To continue:

We are told that the Stockholm meeting failed. Yet when the governments prevented the meeting from taking place, how could they say it failed? The greatest testimony of its success is the activity of the working class movement in all the countries. All the socialist parties are unanimous in their demand for a just and democratic peace. All agree on the big principles which the Russian revolution has put forth. All are against conquest; all against plundering; all against killing of millions for it. The effect of their stand has been shown in the recent statements of statesmen who are now speaking the same words that socialists were denounced for as traitors a year ago. We want peace and the principle of self-determination for each nationality. And this principle is one which must be applied by each to his own country. We believe that a wrong was committed against Alsace-Lorraine forty years ago. But a similar wrong would be committed if against the will of Alsace-Lorraine it should now be given over to such or such a country. We want reparation for the crime of forty-five years ago. But that reparation is a demand that the people of Alsace-Lorraine shall say what their future shall be. [The French minority believed the plebiscite should be under international control.] Never has there been so complete an understanding among the working classes as now. And the belief in an international union of working classes (after the war which was supposed to break it up) will be stronger and deeper than ever.

The session was closed by Ramsay MacDonald. Slender, square-chinned, with a heavy black moustache, with tinges of gray in his shock of hair—his was the instant appeal of the natural orator. His voice is deep and musical, with range and variety of tone. His language is clear, with a lode of poetry, and his face has changing expression under emotional stress.

He was glad that the first note of the conference had been a note of fraternity and internationalism. "We all want peace," he



said. "We want no patched-up peace; we want no truce. We have never had anything else." Then it was that he gave as a peroration the paragraphs quoted at the outset of this chapter.

#### STILL ANOTHER ROUND TABLE

That first evening meeting at Nottingham brought into play some of the men who counted for most in the succeeding Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist conference in February, and who to-day figure largely in every international socialist gathering. Quotation has been made in earlier chapters of some of the speeches at the February meeting, but there the committee work was the important thing, and the sessions were behind closed doors. The British Labour Party conference in June at which its domestic platform was laid down, was also the occasion for exchanges from fraternal delegates. Troelstra, the Dutch socialist leader, who had been in communication with the German socialists, was not permitted to come; but Branting was there from Sweden and a yet more sensational visitor.

Arthur Henderson is a clever stage manager and he scored when he suddenly popped Kerensky upon the platform. The delegates were stunned, enthusiastic, and a few of them were puzzled. The words passed:

We don't want any government plant about this.

What does he represent as fraternal delegate?

Certain persons come and go.

What lay in their mind was this: If Margaret Bondfield could not go to America, representing labor, nor Troelstra come from Holland, why could Kerensky enter England? Why did the government give permission to one and not to another? Was it that Kerensky was to be a decoy for government policy?

Kerensky spoke for a couple of minutes and his "real appearance" was postponed to the next day. Meanwhile some of the delegates became "ugly." "Hear Litvinoff," chanted a woman socialist. Neither regular business nor the pleading of the chairman could overcome her musical drone. A tall, ascetic, young, class-conscious representative of the "left" kept precipitating himself from his seat, like a jack-in-the-box, with a "Mr. Chairman," "Point of order, Mr. Chairman." Ninety per cent of the delegates were growing annoyed at being held up by the group of obstructors.

These are the moments for which Henderson reserves himself. If one object of oratory is to persuade and convince (just as another is to charm and inspire and stimulate) then in attaining his object Henderson is a powerful orator. He speaks without grace or beauty. But he speaks to the primary sense of justice, with a



weight of fact and reason, and directness, in a strong one-toned voice of mastery. In a convention of many voices and wide divergences among the extremists, he bears down and conquers opposition and welds the welter into coherence and unity. Such a volume of power comes out of the man as the writer of these lines has felt only in two other public men. (Those two men were Roosevelt and Moody.) The clash of opinion about breaking the government truce had been sharp.<sup>1</sup> Some had believed it to be a move to lose the war, a pro-German device. Others had wished to break utterly with the government and force the labor members back into private life. Henderson had cleared the air with his deep, powerful voice, and his middle-of-the-way interpretation. And now the convention was in an uproar over Kerensky. About fifty delegates were excited and voluble because they thought that Kerensky was the advance agent of a Russian counter-revolution. Members of the British Socialist Party saw in his coming the beginnings of an attack on the world's first socialist republic. They were determined that he should not be heard. Then came Henderson and removed the whole discussion from the realm of heated feelings and party war-cries. He appealed to the sense of fair play and the right of free speech. And he reduced a shouting half hundred to five persons against 850 when the matter was put to the vote.

Always the vote follows his voice. He doesn't intervene until there is a rough-house. Unlike some men who compromise differences, he doesn't do it by soft soap and gentle conciliation. He uses a cast-iron voice and a bull vitality to pound in the sensible central interpretation of a plain man, and he does it with all the energy and noise of an exhorter of the extreme left.

Henderson is one of the most deceptive men we have met. Like Ulysses, when he is seated you would take him for nobody in particular. In conversation he is a little verbose, impersonal and oratorical. In a small group he is without salience. But when the herd cries of a thousand strong men (representing two and a half million men) pierce through to the layers of his stored vitality, hidden under a commonplace exterior, something awakens and he puts on power and rays it out on the mass till they obey him. He is not the initiator of general ideas; he adjusts policy to labor opinion. But he is honest and he understands the leadership of men. He has served Great Britain well. To the conference Henderson said:

A prominent representative of the left wing suggested that another prominent representative should be heard at our previous con-

<sup>1</sup> See page III.

ference (Litvinoff, the representative of the Bolshevik government). In a spirit of toleration we consented. He came. He made his speech. We did not agree. We listened. We listened as believers in the right of free speech.

The fight was over. Disorder died away. Kerensky came forward, his knees shaking, but with the orator's consciousness of past victories. He was a sick man. He made the impression of a suffering, pure-minded radical, like one of our scholarly East Side Jewish boys. He has a face of seriousness, without humor, yellow-pale, a well-shaped head: the face and head designed for a larger body than his thin, small frame. He has the large mouth of the natural orator, a large but blunt nose. Before his talk, while he waited in an ante-room for the judgment of the delegates, he had walked back and forth in short nervous steps, occasionally pausing before a mirror to adjust his wing collar and puff necktie. He believes he has come to this planet on a high mission, and he has the face of a man who has gone stale with overwork and suffering; a vitality that is wholly of the spirit, with no physique to support it.

Once he begins to speak he loses self-consciousness. His red-rimmed small dark eyes light. His voice, harsh but with a ring, stabs out the sentences. He speaks without effort, rising slowly to gesturing after ten minutes of less impassioned speech. Between sentences he pauses, sometimes for several seconds. Gradually and naturally he fires himself into exaltation and ends in a rush of words which sweeps the audience to applause.

He spoke of the warning voices coming from Russia, when he was chief, when he begged the Allies to make clear their war aims, when they forced him into an offensive that broke Russia, an offensive fought without those war aims made clear:

It is a thousand pities that the warning voices coming from Russia were not at that time heeded by the Western Allies.

The audience cheered loudly.

I bear witness here that the Russian people will never recognize the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which is hurling Russia into the abyss of annihilation.

He spoke of the genuine fanatics and the German agents who enervated the mass of Russian soldiers.

To my astonishment, some very serious European political men consider that régime as democratic which dispersed the constituent assembly, abolished freedom of speech, made human life the easy

prey of every Red guardsman, destroyed the liberty of the elections even in the councils of the workmen, and made an end of all the institutions of self-government that have been elected by universal suffrage. If this method of dealing with the population may be considered democratic, then I shall be permitted to ask what may be the essence and characteristic features of genuine reaction?

To the conference he outlined Russian conditions and asked "whether it is or is not possible to remain a calm spectator." He did not advocate a course of action. There were memorable moments with Kerensky. One was when the audience rose to him and sang "For he's a jolly good fellow." It is the song with which the British greet a port wine peer and a jolly tar. It needs ruddy, rubicund faces and bottles and birds in the shank of a happy and mellow evening. Sung to this stricken man, lately out of hell, it had grim irony.

The other quaint episode was when Kerensky, swept and uplifted by the good will of the conference, turned and kissed the very British stolid face of Arthur Henderson.

It is to be remembered in sketching this scene that the history of Kerensky is woven in with that of Henderson. It was the visit to Russia of Henderson and his talks with Kerensky that sent him home a believer in an international consultative labor conference. Then followed Henderson's advocacy of Stockholm, his ejection from the War Cabinet and his enhanced position in British labor.

In the interval since the Nottingham meeting, the crushing implications of the mailed fist, pounded by the German War Party at Brest, had become altogether clear; its clenched blow at the Western front had brought tragedy into uncounted French and Belgian and British and German homes. Would the German workers keep in its grip or reach out after the clasp of democratic fellowship, offered at the London meeting by hands which held firmly the while their two-edged blade? These things and the course of allied diplomacy were uppermost in the minds of the fraternal delegates who spoke.

First, came Pierre Renaudel, of the French majority, who talked at a swift gallop of words in a loud monotone with that note of alarm which one sometimes marks in the Latin. He said:

We must appeal to the revolutionary elements in the Central Empires. When we feel that movement coming toward us, then we shall have to see that it receives freedom of expression.

There is still required to meet the requirements of the memorandum that elements in Germany should acknowledge the responsibility for the war. Then it is for us to meet such a movement on

their part, and not to allow the governments to break such a movement.

Perhaps more surely than any other speaker of the conference Jean Longuet, who followed him, struck the emotional receptivity of the audience. He struck it several times. His personality and his words create a little of a spell. He is a poet and mystic and dreamer, a dangerous dreamer to the mind of his opponents. He has the blood of three races in him, French and German and English, and so comes of an international quality by birthright. Then in his person the long history of the labor movement is incarnated as in no other leader in Europe. He said:

Our Jingoës have played into the hands of the German Jingoës. Your country and mine are in a worse condition, military and diplomatic, than a year ago. Unrest brought out 180,000 workingmen in Paris alone, demanding that war aims should be published. In war time there exists no opportunity to have the voice of the nation heard. The battleground of militarism was once Czarism and is now Germanism. As a French patriot, I protest against the blind never-endism and jingoism. German militarism is the worst in the world, and I think that the blind never-endism policy of some of our leaders has helped the dangerous designs of German militarism. It is because we, of what has been called the minority, are demanding the uprising of the German people that we demand an international meeting. The German people will not rise at the appeal of the capitalistic governments of France and England. But they will rise at the appeal of the working class (loudest applause of the day). This is why we wish the international meeting.

As at the inter-Allied labor meeting in February, Albert Thomas was there, the French Socialist of the "right," former minister of munitions. Despite canards to the contrary, he reaffirmed his subscription to the British labor procedure. He is heavy set, with a ruddy rectangular beard. Full of vitality, he gestures with two hands and arms, lifting them higher and higher as if lifting a gift to heaven. He said:

The military victory must be supplemented by the power of the international labor movement.

He wrote on June 28, during the labor conference:

By the rapid development of her forces, the Entente must assume the superior rôle. With perfect frankness, she must, at the same time, proclaim ceaselessly and define with increasing clearness the conditions of a just peace which she wishes to establish upon the earth.



Vandervelde of Belgium came next, with his authority of bearing and strong voice of determination:

In this hour of supreme anxiety, when the fate of democracy is at stake, I cannot think of Stockholm or Berne; I think of Calais, Amiens and Paris. After the infamous Brest-Litovsk peace, the German majority Socialists have raised a feeble protest, but they have not even recorded their votes against it in the Reichstag.

The Socialists in occupied Belgium send a message of greeting. They approve the attitude of their representatives at the February inter-Allied conference. We are ready to take part in an international conference, provided that those who stand on the principles of internationalism shall be there. Those who have betrayed those principles cannot be present. We have sent our resolutions to the German Socialists. As long as they do not answer we cannot attend an international conference.

At the same time, we know there are those in the enemy ranks who stand for democratic peace—Kautsky, Bernstein, Rosa Luxemburg, and other independent socialists. We must hope that the ferment of revolution which exists in every country will, if led aright, help us. When that day comes, we may hope that the time has come for the meeting of the International.

Hjalmar Branting, minister of state, leader of the Social Democratic Party of Sweden, was more the typical statesman than any other person present. He was cautious and wise in speech, strongly pro-Ally, anti-German military, anti-Bolsheviki, but with temperateness in every utterance. He spoke as a man whose words carry influence and who, therefore, must be precise and sparing. He has gray hair, brushed back from the forehead, bushy eyebrows, a flowing moustache, large, dim eyes. He is solidly built, a man of weight, all around, the experienced administrator, the responsible leader, the first citizen of Sweden. He gave the observer the feeling that for long vision and surety of action he was the outstanding man upon the platform. He has little appeal to an audience. There is no emotional fire to him. There is nothing histrionic in his make-up. It is all solid worth and intelligence.

Branting's attitude was accurately given by the *Labour Leader*:

M. Branting looked and, throughout his visit, spoke the part of an elderly responsible progressive statesman of a neutral government, terribly afraid of saying half a sentence that might prejudice his power to play a useful part in bringing a people's peace out of the welter of the world war.

He made it clear, said the *Labour Leader* (itself an organ of the "left"), that



his life-long as well as recent experiences of Prussian militarism had made him on the whole a majority rather than a minority socialist among the allies. He told us of Finland's recent sufferings and was sternly determined that we should not suspect him of either Bermondsey or Bolsheviki sympathies, and seemed more than perplexed at ours.

In a talk with the writer, Branting said:

I have come on the invitation of the Labour Party. I was a little uncertain whether this was the opportune time, because the offensive was not finished, and I believed the time would be more appropriate after the collapse of the German offensive, when an equilibrium was established. The League of Nations, I hope, will come, after real peace and in connection with it. It should be a council of free nations who can enforce their will on humanity.

We have had no manifestation from the German Majority Socialist Party. One cannot say with surety what is their intention. I have had no direct information from them for long months. In certain things, there are great differences between German majority socialists and all others. The German socialists should give the same guarantee as the allied socialists.

In the opinion of the Social Democratic Party of Sweden, the Bolsheviki are the enemies of the socialist movement. They persecute the socialists and suppress their journals. There is a growing feeling in Sweden for the allies. Our activists (for entering the war on the German side) are discredited by now. Among the leaders of the Bolsheviks there are pro-Germans.

To the conference, Branting said:

In Sweden, the Socialist and Labour Party now have more than one-third of the seats in the House of Commons. In the war, they have stood for neutrality, anti-military policy and social reform.

The work of the International has fallen on the small countries, as the link between the belligerents. It is their duty to make the reconstruction of the International possible.

We think it possible to find certain socialists in Germany who have stood against imperialism.

It is possible that by the reconstruction of the International we might have avoided for the world the great and unhappy events and the terrible losses which have occurred since last summer. Had our comrade, Troelstra, been allowed to attend this conference we should have heard more of the present movement in the labor world of Germany. A blunder which I cannot understand has prevented him from coming here. (Voice: "Lloyd George.")

The Independent Socialists of Germany are now fighting so bravely that we can hope that even amongst the German majority socialists, where imperial currents are so strong, there are other

currents running in the other direction. I hope amongst that majority there are many who will see they must come over to fight for a just peace. The resurrection of the International is certain.

To Camille Huysmans, M. Branting said:

I have the impression of the American labor delegation that they do not well understand for what reason we are more concerned about *time* than they are. We must avoid the material ruin of Europe, and for this reason we fight; but we have also a peace policy.

Summing up the speeches of the fraternal delegates, and the sense of the conference:

They looked to an international conference, but not till

(a) The German democracy showed convincing signs of responding to the inter-Allied memorandum and accepting its principles.

(b) The collapse of the German offensive.

Because the western offensive was at its height and because the labor movement of Germany had not met the proposals of Allied labor, the British Labour Party in this June conference took no further steps in international diplomacy. The conditions were not ripe for an international meeting. The time was not now. But British labor was, none the less, slowly moving towards a consultative conference. Its belief was confirmed that there was no way but to destroy the military power of Germany, the power which betrayed Russia at Brest-Litovsk. But it believed that the way to destroy it was by vigorous prosecution of the war and by the creation of a democratic movement in Germany. J. H. Thomas, secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen (400,000 members), stood, with Ben Tillett, Will Thorne and Will Crooks, for the vigorous prosecution of the war. But he and his railwaymen were committed to the inter-allied memorandum, looking towards an international consultative conference. On June 16 he said to the railwaymen:

Our cause is what it was four years ago. It was not territory, not conquest, but the destruction of militarism. For that reason I approved the Stockholm conference. Labor must fight and must insist upon meeting the workers of the word face to face. This is the only way of insuring an open peace.

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In Part I, we traced the origins of the British labor offensive (in the last six months of 1917); in Part II its juncture with Allied labor and socialist groups (in the first six months of 1918) in a common western front; we can now turn to a consideration of political and industrial developments in Great Britain which paralleled these movements in international affairs.



PART III

THE ENGLAND THEY ARE FIGHTING FOR





## CHAPTER XII

### THE WORKERS AT WESTMINSTER

THE British Labour Party transformed itself during the first half of 1918. A federation of trade unions, trade councils and socialist societies it became a national party of workers "by hand or by brain." Its many streams gathered into a watercourse.

The passage of the Representation of the People Act, adding eight or more million voters to the electorate, made it necessary for the political labor movement to widen its course to take in these new affluents, or be swamped by the very suffrage reform it had helped bring into flood. Moreover, labor was forewarned by its leaders that the approach of reconstruction called for far-reaching engineering by the people themselves, if the post-bellum watersheds of existence were not to be controlled by the propertied interests through their hold on the old parties. The political movement gathered head from the same freshets of social unrest that we have seen mounting higher and higher behind the conviction that with respect to the conduct of the war itself, not in national resistance to Prussian aggression (in that labor was at one with the government), but in a working-class diplomacy, in the appeal to democratic elements in Central Europe and in the establishment of an unimperialistic peace, the workers needed a free channel for expression distinct from the Foreign Office or the War Cabinet.

So, in six months' time came the reorganization of the British Labour Party, the breaking of the truce with the government and the formulation of its radical domestic platform. The first and second of these developments will be taken up in this chapter; the third in the chapter succeeding.

By the new constitution adopted at a special conference in late February,<sup>1</sup> provision was made for the first time for individual membership in the party, and special facilities were given to women electors to join. A local labor party was called for in each Parliamentary constituency, with separate sections for men and women. Hitherto, there had been less than 100 such locals. The National Executive was enlarged from 16 members to 22, 13 to be chosen

<sup>1</sup> Appendix III.

from the trade unions and other societies, five from the local organizations, and four from women. The "objects" of the party (hitherto defined simply as "to organize and maintain in Parliament and the country a political labor party") were expanded to include the promotion of the interests of all producers without distinction of class or occupation. These objects were set out under three headings—"National," "Inter-Dominion" and "International":

### NATIONAL

(a) To organize and maintain in Parliament and in the country a political labor party, and to insure the establishment of a local labor party in every county constituency and every parliamentary borough, with suitable divisional organization in the separate constituencies of divided boroughs.

(b) To coöperate with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, or other kindred organizations, in joint political or other action in harmony with the party constitution and standing orders.

(c) To give effect as far as may be practicable to the principles from time to time approved by the party conference.

(d) To secure for the producers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service.

(e) Generally to promote the political, social and economic emancipation of the people, and more particularly of those who depend directly upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life.

### INTER-DOMINION

(f) To coöperate with the labor organizations in the dominions and dependencies with a view to promoting the purposes of the party and to take common action for the promotion of a higher standard of social and economic life for the working population of the respective countries.

### INTERNATIONAL

(g) To coöperate with the labor organizations in other countries, and to assist in organizing a federation of nations for the maintenance of freedom and peace, and for the establishment of suitable machinery for the adjustment and settlement of international disputes by conciliation or judicial arbitration, and for such international legislation as may be practicable.

Further points as to the make-up and development of the political labor movement in Great Britain will show the significance of this change. The following table gives the fluctuations in the party membership since its formation in 1900:

	Trade Unions.		Trades Councils and Local Labor Parties.		Socialist Societies.	
	No.	Membership.	No.	No.	Membership.	Total.
1900-1 .....	41	353,070	7	3	22,861	375,931
1901-2 .....	65	455,450	21	2	13,861	469,311
1902-3 .....	127	847,315	49	2	13,835	861,150
1903-4 .....	165	956,025	76	2	13,775	969,800
1904-5 .....	158	855,270	73	2	14,730	900,000
1905-6 .....	158	904,496	73	2	16,784	921,280
1906-7 .....	176	975,182	83	2	20,885	996,338
1907 .....	181	1,049,673	92	2	22,267	1,072,413
1908 .....	176	1,127,035	133	2	27,465	1,158,565
1909 .....	172	1,450,648	155	2	30,982	1,486,308
1910 .....	151	1,394,402	148	2	31,377	1,430,539
1911 .....	141	1,501,783	149	2	31,404	1,539,092
1912 .....	130	1,858,178	146	2	31,237	1,895,498
1913 .....	†	†	158	2	33,304	†
1914 .....	101	1,572,391	179	2	33,230	1,612,147
1915 .....	111	2,053,735	177	2	32,838	2,093,365
1916 .....	119	2,170,782	199	3	42,190	2,219,764
1917 .....	123	2,415,383	239	3	47,140	2,465,131

† Owing to the operation of the Osborne Judgment it was impossible to compile membership statistics for 1913.

At the close of 1917, the British Labour Party was, thus, a federation of 123 trade unions, 146 trade councils (which are composed of trade union branches), and 93 local labor parties, together with 3 socialist societies, a women's labor league, and one coöperative society. These bodies overlapped in a variety of ways; but of the aggregate membership of 2,465,131, 2,415,383 were affiliated through distinctly labor bodies. Of the remainder, 10,000 were affiliated through the British Socialist Party, 35,000 through the Independent Labour Party, 2,140 through the Fabian Society. The Tunbridge Wells Coöperative Society brought in 2,600, the Women's Labour League 5,500. It will be seen that there were less than 50,000 "party socialists" among two and a half million trade unionists. That is, 98 per cent of the British Labour Party was trade unionist; 2 per cent "party socialist" and even of that 2 per cent, a large fraction was trade unionist. We are thus dealing, in contrast to the American Federation of Labor, with a political labor movement; but in contrast to the political labor movements on the European continent, with a trade union, rather than an old-line socialist body.

This make-up has been reflected in both party control and finances. No trade council or local labor party contributed over £2 a year to the treasury; the socialist groups together paid less than £200, or less than each of such trade union bodies as the Amalgamated Association of Card and Blowing Room Operatives

(54,967 members), the National Union of Boot and Shoe operatives (51,035 members), the Postmen's Federation (54,414 members). The general unions of unskilled and semi-skilled labor ranged from the 28,985 of the Dock Labourers and the 47,881 of the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union, to the 82,117 of the National Amalgamated Union of Labour, the 168,000 of the Workers' Union and the 188,774 of the National Union of General Workers. And outstripping them came the great trade groups—the Amalgamated Society of Engineers with 160,000 members, the National Union of Railwaymen with 130,368 members,<sup>1</sup> the Textile Factory Workers' Association with 193,788 (paying £807), and the Miners' Federation with 600,000 members and contributing £2,500 to the common purse.

These national unions have functioned also in the party representation in Parliament, putting up the necessary financial guarantees for election expenses. Thus, a list of 37 constituencies and candidates, published at Nottingham, began with—

*Ayrshire, South*—James Brown, 56 Annabank-by-Ayr, Scotland  
(Miners' Federation of Great Britain),

and closed with

*Wolverhampton, West*—A. G. Walkden, 337 Gray's Inn Road, London, W. C. (Railway Clerks' Association).

The Miners sponsored 12 out of the 37, or more than the 10 of the Independent Labour Party. Out of a supplemental list of 81 candidates who had received official endorsement of the party executive and offered themselves for selection by constituencies, 20 had been put forward by national labor unions which undertook to finance their candidatures if the districts nominating them met with their approval.

The approach of the party executive to the problem of reorganization was set forth in submitting the agenda for discussion at the February conference. It said:

The strain imposed by the war has not only broken down the competitive industrial system and has led to national organization to a degree that appeared practically impossible in the days of peace. It has also been possible to withdraw over five million men from national production, and yet at the same time to increase our productivity to an enormous extent. These and many similar facts have

<sup>1</sup> These figures refer to the membership affiliated to the British Labour Party; not to the total membership of the organizations.



led the more thoughtful of the community to consider proposals for national reorganization on lines which were popular only in labor circles before the war. Further, the participation of the British labor movement in international affairs and its attempt to institute a genuine working class diplomacy, has brought prestige to the party in a manner that can hardly be realized without a full knowledge of the facts.

Labor policy on the national food supply has also been consistently ahead of that propounded by other political sections and has had to be invariably adopted after suffering months of hostility or indifference. Moreover, it is remembered that the party from the early days of the war has stood consistently for a decent system of separate allowances and pensions for the men with the colors, and their dependants, and while the original "£1 per week campaign" did not altogether achieve its purpose, constant labor pressure, particularly on the part of local labor organizations throughout the country, made its influence felt in the right direction.

All these circumstances have been the occasion for the development of a certain amount of community consciousness, and the party has been definitely accepted by ever-increasing numbers of the public as its concrete expression.

When the executive committee, therefore, at the suggestion of the secretary, considered the possible developments of the party in the future, there was general unanimity as to the lines that should be adopted. It was felt very strongly that our machinery should be adapted so as to bring into the ranks of the party those large sections of the public, who, for various reasons, have neither the necessity nor opportunity of joining trade unions on the one hand, or, on the other, who are not prepared to associate with the socialist organizations already affiliated with the party.

The difficulty lay in reconciling this policy of expansion with one which, at the outset of a costly campaign, would not scrap the backing in money and interest of the constituent labor bodies. On one hand, there was rebellion at the block system of voting, by which a few great unions could control things, and on the other, fear-someness lest, in throwing open the doors to outsiders, labor would lose the political instrument it had so slowly built up. The outcome was a compromise. As Henderson put it:

In drafting the new constitution, the executive had regard to the necessity of achieving unity. Under the new scheme we have sought to distribute power and responsibility between the national unions and the local organizations, and between the official element and the individual member. One important feature of the constitution is that it makes the local groups the unit of organization rather than the national societies, and thus establishes a more direct relationship with the individual electors in every constituency.



## THE RISE OF POLITICAL ACTION

By so much has trade unionism entered upon a new stage in its organized development in England. Labor, unadulterated by middle-class persons, had first to make its fight as a body of wage-earners for the right of collective bargaining. This is the long fight of wage-earners alone—manual workers, craftsmen. Gradually, British labor found that it had to spend itself in agitation and indirect pressure in order to protect itself against hostile acts and to secure labor legislation. Lacking a political party, it lacked direct representation. It sought it, and trade unionism entered upon a second stage.

In the final years of the last century, Liberal-Labour members slid into Parliament between the stratified layers of the old parties. In 1899, the Trades Union Congress established a political labor organization by creating the Labour Representation Committee. Out of this, through the years of this century, has grown the British Labour Party. The Labour Party was strengthened by the Taff Vale case when in 1902 the Taff Vale Railway Company obtained damages from a railway union because of a strike involving breach of contract. The return of 29 labor members to Parliament in 1906 was the answer to this attempt to cripple the industrial movement. Labor learned that when it is attacked on the industrial field, one of the swiftest redresses is by political demonstration. In the same year, 1906, labor obtained the Trade Disputes Act, freeing the trade unions from such actions as that of the Taff Vale Railway Company. Naturally enough, British labor came to believe that direct political power (that is, representation in Parliament) is right and necessary to protect the labor movement from industrial crushing.

This belief did not go unchallenged. In 1909, a trade unionist by the name of Osborne claimed that the expenditure of the funds of his railway union for political purposes was illegal. The House of Lords decided in his favor against the union. Labor replied to this and other challenges by electing 42 members in December, 1910, to the House of Commons; in 1913, it obtained a Trade Union Act, which in part set aside the Osborne judgment. Again, labor found that political action alters industrial status.

As C. T. Cramp, president of the National Union of Railwaymen, said on June 17, 1918:

The position (of labor) cannot be met by industrial action alone. The incidence of taxation and many other problems must be fought out in Parliament.

The war brought in the third stage more swiftly than it would otherwise have come—that in which the workers generally recognize

that to make the world safe for such part of democracy as they may be, they must concern themselves with more than hours and wages in the shop, and more than labor legislation in Parliament. They must concern themselves with the whole scheme of social conditions and relations in which these things are imbedded, and which affect unnumbered other people in much the same way. The shoemaker's children are not the only ones without shoes. The war experience that drove this realization home, opened up the vista of making common cause with those unnumbered others to whom, being organized, labor could offer not only proposals for democratic change but also a practical political fellowship.

The party's re-birth registered the fact that labor had slowly worked out a policy distinct from that of the governing classes. It saw the necessity of sharing in the control of state policy and of sharing that control with those who felt as it did. The danger to the Allied cause, as the labor leaders saw it, had been in stripping the war of its moral values. They did not wish that Lord Milner, Lord Curzon and Mr. Balfour should have the sole statement of war aims. Likewise, they saw that the common people of all England could not leave the care of disabled soldiers and sailors, the control of mines and railways, the release of the land, the restoration or substitution of trade union regulations, taxation, to Lord Milner, Lord Curzon and Mr. Balfour, alone. They desired a different kind of reconstruction out of the wreck of the war.

So labor hitched its wagon to a star and set off as a common carrier down the war-sobered high roads of old England. As Arthur Henderson put it:—Labor could no longer be “merely a critical voice in Parliament and an active revolutionary ferment in the country”; it would “at no distant date be required to accept responsibility for the carrying out of the policy it advocates.”

#### THE BREAKING OF THE TRUCE

Military developments and the continued postponement of a general election made the Labour Party move slowly in 1918, following the February conference at which it adopted its new constitution. With the German drive against Amiens, it shelved a scheme of propaganda meetings throughout the spring in the industrial cities. (This was mistakenly interpreted in the American press as a decision to abandon its whole war aims and inter-belligerent conference procedure.)

At its June conference, it “broke the truce” but did so in a way which upset the feelings both of the extreme left and of the government labor group of the extreme right. It carried the mod-

erate left by taking a step in the direction they wanted to go, and the moderate right by stopping short of a decision that meant that labor members must leave the government. It severed labor policy from government policy in the practical politics of current elections while guarding against a move which could be interpreted as out of sympathy with the rigorous support of the Allied troops in throwing back the swollen German armies from France, now as at no time since the earlier years of the war, threatening Paris and the channel ports.

Elihu Root (July, 1918) phrased with exactness the attitude of the British Labour Party to the coalition government. His analysis concerned itself with our own government, but the claim he made for the Republican Party was the claim made by the British Labour Party. He said:

We have been building up by a great mass of statutes an executive authority unprecedented in scope and absolutism. No government can afford to go on without the tests and criticisms of policy and performance which can hardly be furnished during the continuance of this war except by putting Republicans in Congress. [Labor men in Parliament.] With the tremendous power which the exigencies of war have vested in the executive branch of government, it is very difficult for legislative members of the party in power to express, or indeed to form, independent judgment and to subject measures proposed for legislation to the process of correction and improvement by discussion and amendment; yet without this, terrible mistakes are certain to be made.

[In the matter of policy, of course, the analogy would be closer if we should imagine Root in the White House and Wilson stating the case for the more radical party out of power.]

At the Nottingham conference in January, the question of the continuance of the labor members in the coalition government was already actively agitated. The action of the executive in supporting the candidature of G. H. Roberts at the recent bye-election at Norwich, following his appointment as minister of labor and in the face of opposition from the local Trades and Labour Council, was sharply protested in resolutions offered by the Huddersfield and District Associated Trades and Labour Council and from the similar body at Great Yarmouth. Resolutions for the withdrawal of the labor members from the coalition government were offered by the Manchester and Salford Labour Party; by the Lambeth Trades Council and Labour Representation Committee (which urged it "in order to regain for labor the freedom of complete independence, when dealing with the great economic, industrial and social prob-

lems which must inevitably be dealt with in the near future"); by the British Socialist Party (which held that "the methods employed to remove Mr. Henderson from the War Cabinet when acting in perfect accord with the decisions of the Labour Party, prove that participation in the government and fidelity to the labor movement are incompatible"); by the Willesden Labour Party; by the Sheffield Trades and Labour Council (which maintained that "the chief political function of the working class is the destruction of the existing capitalist order"); by the East Ham Trades and Labour Council ("in view of the continued bare-faced robbery of the people by the food pirates and the open support given by the government to this action in steadfastly refusing to suppress the robbers and to administer the whole food supply of the nation in the interests of the people"); by the Edinburgh Labour Party, the Scientific Instrument Makers' Trade Society, and the Glasgow Trades Council. As noted on page 45, under Henderson's personal leadership, the resolutions were voted down, on the ground that withdrawal might embarrass the government in the prosecution of the war. Six months later, at the June Conference, the party executive itself came forward with this resolution:

That this conference of the Labour Party accepts the recommendation of the party executive that the existence of the political truce should be no longer recognized.

In presenting the resolution, Henderson recalled the facts that soon after the outbreak of war a political truce was entered into by representatives of the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party, and the Labour Party, wherein it was agreed that in the event of any parliamentary vacancies occurring there should be no contested elections. The truce held good with renewals until December 31, 1916, when, he said, the other parties sought to import conditions into the agreement which the Labour Party executive were not prepared to accept. Since the end of 1916, there had been no written compact. But in the intervening period, the executive felt that the circumstances of the times were such that it was altogether desirable that the spirit of the truce should be observed. Nevertheless, on several occasions the affiliated labor organizations, in constituencies where vacancies occurred, had accepted the executives' view with the greatest reluctance. In the Keighley and Wansbeck divisions, the local organizations contested the vacancies against the executive's recommendation. In Keighley, the candidate, on a peace-by-negotiation war platform, polled two thousand out of six thousand votes. In Wansbeck, the miner candidate, on the same platform, polled five thousand out of approximately eleven thousand



votes, and came within 547 votes of winning. By June, therefore, the executive had decided that the conference should be invited to vote on the issue of breaking the truce with the government. Henderson said:

I hold very strong views about the government and the war, and that is why I have declined, during the last twelve months, to take any action that would place this government out of office and put in a government whose policy I know nothing about. The last thing the Labour Party ought to do, having regard to its small membership in the House, is to make itself responsible for putting one government out without knowing what the next would be. If your executive had come to the conclusion that the time had arrived when we ought to withdraw the whole of our members from the coalition, they would have faced the conference boldly with a recommendation to that effect.

We believe it was much better that bye-elections should not be contested. That was observed until the Salford election. Ben Tillett was one of our listed candidates, and he went there, and fought and won. He, a supporter of the war, broke the truce and won. Can you wonder if somebody thinks they can repeat Tillett? That is the issue we had to face, and were compelled to face, because Salford was followed by Keighley, and Keighley by Wansbeck.

The press created a crisis which is blown to the winds. We are asked to vote on one aspect only—the truce *as regards bye-elections*. The phrase could have been included. The resolution can have no other meaning. It is not intended to cover all relationships. Those who link up the truce and the coalition government do so for purposes of mischief. Not till after the Wansbeck election did we make our decision. We've either got to have a truce and everybody keep it, or else rid the executive of responsibility. You've got to accept the truce if you reject the recommendation. The executive will lose little sleep whichever way you decide.

If the executive had wished the withdrawal of our representatives from the government, it would have come out and said so. In a war, one of the dangers is to change the government too easily. For myself, I shall not be party to any government that is not under the control of labor. But there is no connection between approving the candidacy of the miners' representative, and breaking the government. This, then, is the only issue: to have a truce and everybody keep it, or no truce.

Then followed a speech by Robert Smillie against Henderson's conservative course. Smillie wanted to break the truce and he wanted, also, the labor members out. In his voice there is that which makes you remember the multitude whom he represents. He is a man of middle life, with a face of sensitiveness—a face that is sad in repose and into which consciousness of power passes when



he speaks. His eyes carry a far-seeing look. He is a man of the common people who has seen and felt suffering. He hates that men should needlessly suffer as he hates nothing else, and this makes him the militant pacifist that he is. In supporting the British war aims memorandum at the joint December (1917) meeting, he had said: "Peace now would be a victory for humanity, and peace two years hence, whoever the victor, would be a defeat for humanity." To this June (1918) conference, Smillie said:

At Wansbeck, we wanted a miner. The miners are not an unimportant part of this conference. With the assistance of the Labour Party, we could have won the election. We were told that there was a truce. As it was, without the help of the Labour Party, the election gave an indication of the temper of this country from end to end. After the truce was entered into, it was reported to the rank and file. And now, this morning, we were amazed to hear from Mr. Henderson that there has been no truce since 1916. And he suggests one or two words, "as regards bye-elections," which will change the whole sense of it. Mr. Henderson has had a hand in changing governments during this war. Blindfolded in this hall, he could make sure of a better government than the present—a government that has refused to allow you to entertain an honored guest, Troelstra, the Dutch delegate, that has refused to allow us to choose our company, a government who prevented Maggie Bondfield from going to America.<sup>1</sup>

And we are going to end the truce, Mr. Henderson.

We are not as strong as we should be if our labor men were outside the government. We should have won our Wansbeck election with the assistance of the Labour Party. I sincerely hope this conference will end our connection with the coalition government. There is no dignity left to the labor movement if the government refuses our invited guests and refuses to let Maggie Bondfield go, because she does not think as the government thinks. So now we are to end a truce that doesn't exist, and we want no new truces behind our backs.

J. Bromley, secretary of the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (34,000 members), backed up Smillie and said:

The opinion of the rank and file is to break the truce.

J. Jones, a delegate of the General Workers (164,000 members), represented the socialist right. He said:

It's not unity some people want but scalps. Bad as this country is, it's the best I know of. I'm not going to change Lloyd George

<sup>1</sup>Miss Margaret Bondfield was selected to go to the St. Paul meeting of the American Federation of Labor as one of the two fraternal delegates representing the Trades Union Congress. Her going was frustrated.

for Lansdowne. We want to escape the pitfalls our comrades in other countries have met. Lord Curzon is more hateful than a Prussian Junker. Carson to me is first cousin to Judas Iscariot. But in spite of the bad company we have to keep, we'll go on with the government. We have gained the recognition from the government, that from the ranks of organized labor men can be found who can handle the situation. I'm a pro-war socialist and a pro-Ally socialist.

Robert Williams is secretary of the Federation of Transport Workers (350,000 members) and a leader of the radical element. He said he expected to see Clynes (who was then parliamentary secretary to the food controller) come forward in defense of the position of himself and the other labor members of the government:

I look on Mr. Clynes as a kind of devil's advocate. The Labour Party is irrevocably established on the economic necessities of the common people. Perhaps it would be better if shorn of some of its present members. If the resolution means the withdrawal of Clynes and Barnes, so much the better for the labor movement.

As the debate went on, as between "anti-national factionalists" and "bitter-endian jingoes," neither had the advantage. The position of the center was strengthened. W. Whitefield, a delegate of the Miners' Federation, protested against Smillie's views, saying:

The head of a great organization should not make speeches on which the rank and file are not consulted.

Sylvia Pankhurst (of the British Socialist Party, with a membership of 10,000) spoke of "labor members forced to vote against 30 shillings for agricultural labor," of "secret treaties, covering not only Alsace-Lorraine, but the left bank of the Rhine and Mesopotamia," of "the atrocious Japanese and Chinese business," of "the Japanese entering Russia to crush the socialist movement."

Whitefield and Miss Pankhurst were dealt with exactly alike by the conference. Their first sentences were listened to in silent attention. As Whitefield proceeded to give a militant pro-war speech, and Miss Pankhurst to give a denunciation of foreign policy, the delegates lost interest in what had become old stuff, and chatted among themselves till a universal murmur arose, with the figure of a kindly old man inaudible but gesticulating, followed by a pretty woman, audible, earnest, but ineffective. As the buzz of conversation grew against Miss Pankhurst, and as the chairman implored her not to roam the earth but to speak to the question, she said:

We want to end the truce because, as I say, our foreign policy is wrong. If you don't fight bye-elections, you are responsible for foreign policy, profiteering, low soldiers' pensions, massacres in Ireland.

George N. Barnes, one of the eight labor members in the Lloyd-George government, and successor to Henderson in the War Cabinet, spoke in a sad, tired voice, as if the responsibilities of his office had almost overborne him. He spoke as to a lost cause. He was interrupted with murmurs of dissent. When he said he would regard relief from office as a "great deliverance," a mighty "Oh" went up from the front seats. He had the respect but not the backing of the majority in his argument that labor must swallow the government policy whole. He said:

If you pass this resolution, it seems to me you will be driven to take the next step by the logic of events. There is a great deal more in the resolution than would appear on the face of it. This is one act of many in the last few years. This is the culminating act, engineered by those who have taken advantage of every grievance, real or imaginary, during the last three years, who have trotted out imaginary secret treaties (cries of "Oh"), who have taken advantage of our weariness, who have trotted out tales about financiers meeting abroad, who have done every mortal thing within their power to separate the people from those who are prosecuting the war.

I believe this resolution will have the effect of weakening not only the nation but the Labour Party. There are many who believe that the Labour Party is stronger to-day because of the strenuous propaganda of Mr. Smillie and his friends. I believe that is a profound mistake. I believe that the Labour Party has gained in strength because of its attitude at the beginning of the war and since.

I am in the government as the representative of the Labour Party. I'm going to stop there till the Labour Party withdraws me. Consider the position of divided allegiance that this resolution to break the truce puts us into. What am I to do? ["Get out," a delegate shouts.] I am for this war. It is a war for the liberties of people in this and other countries. This resolution will create political factions. It may have the effect of getting the government to declare war against us. This old country is, with all its faults, the best of all. Unity against a common foe—the Labour Party has stood for this for three and a half years. The resolution will put snags in the way of the government. Let us reject the resolution and reaffirm our resolution to win the war.

He told how impossible his position would become if the government sent him to a constituency to support the coalition candi-

date and the Labour Party asked him to back the opposition candidate.

Then rose J. R. Clynes.

As the political writers used to say, he is the "little giant" of the trade union political movement. He needs a platform in order to be seen, for he is tiny, and they gave him the platform. He is clear-thinking and direct. He is only a few inches over five feet in height. His early hardships have turned him gray and left him frail. What he said, at this distance without the matrix of labor politics and personal feeling which gave each sentence its setting, has no very spectacular quality. But he hewed to the shortest line between positions which were tenable to his fellow members in the government and to his fellows in the "new majority" in the Labour Party—the line which the conference took. He said:

I do not go so far as Mr. Barnes. Labor must reserve some measure of freedom. I am of the same mind concerning the resolution as that of the executive, not caring much whether it's passed or not. Do the trade unions and constitutional parts of the labor movement want to resist the government in its opposition to German aggression? Let us be fair in this matter of passports. The Bolshevik government refused passports to socialists. Other governments have refused passports. They are not predisposed villains.

What is the purpose of this resolution? Is it to make the government weaker in the prosecution of the war? Are we labor members to leave the government for the purpose of making the government stronger in the prosecution of war? I'm willing to take any method to test the opinion of the rank and file on this. Let one of the delegates who differs with me resign his seat in his working class constituency, and I'll resign mine. I'm willing to test out any constituency on his position and mine. Is organized labor prepared to barter Belgium? Is organized labor prepared to give up the rights of small nations? [A voice: "Ireland."] Is labor prepared to be a sect and sever itself from the great national purpose?

When our inter-Allied war aims reached Germany, they were received with a whiff of contempt. [Voice: "Unfair." Interruptions.]

Are you willing to fight for labor's war terms as well as to formulate them? I'm willing to take the test this minute of allowing the working class to decide on my position.

Next came Ben Turner, one of the executives of the Labour Party. He represents the General Union of Textile Workers (21,000 members). He said:

Include in that test the soldiers and sailors. The rank and file opinion is that they're as anxious for the prosecution of peace now as they were for war. (Cheers from most of the delegates.)



I ask our members in the government, as pals of my own, to come on the side of the soldiers and sailors who want peace, and the women who want peace. There has been much spoken here of Germany's shameful peace with Russia. Yes, but that was the peace of military victory—a peace of force. What the peoples, all the people of Europe, need, is a peace by negotiation.

Then came the vote, 1,704,000 in favor of breaking the truce with the government, 951,000 against,—a majority of 753,000. The vote was a broad hint to the administration. As one delegate expressed it—"We have a reactionary government. This is a kind of warning to them that they take care." *The Telegraph* (a semi-official government organ) scented danger:

Its underlying purpose is not merely to break the truce in the constituencies but to break the coalition government by making the position of labor ministers impossible. Those who engineered this knew that any direct attack was foredoomed to failure because labor remains as unshaken in its determination to win the war as it was when the first truce was signed. Robert Smillie, the president of the Miners' Federation, and possibly the most powerful figure in the British trade union movement, was in his most aggressive mood. His speech was almost as bitter against Mr. Henderson as against the government.

This was over-stating it. Clynes' stand, as a member of the food administration, enabled the conference to break the truce with the government without swinging so far to the left as to create the impression of national disunity in the face of the German drive. When he first rose to speak, the delegate behind the writer said, "Now, he will straighten everything out." This was less true of his remarks in the debate than of the public statement with which he followed up the vote and in which he summed up the action taken as meaning not that labor would lessen its support in the prosecution of the war, nor that representatives of labor would cease to serve their country in any office of state; it expressed the desire in labor circles to put forward candidates in bye-elections without the restraint which the party truce had imposed. Clynes' moderate leadership made him the outstanding figure of the conference, just as in the weeks succeeding he became the most talked of man in the whole labor movement. During the June conference, he was reelected to the executive committee of the Labour Party by a vote of over two million, which was 440,000 more than the next in line. And on Lord Rhondda's death, he was made Food Controller of Great Britain.



## THE ERA OF RESPONSIBILITY

Clynes is fifty years old. He went to work as a half-timer in the jenny-gate at the Dowry Mill, Oldham, when he was ten years old. Two years later he became a full-time worker. At twenty-two he was organizer for the Lancashire district of the Gasworkers' and General Workers' Union. For twenty-one years he was secretary of the Oldham Trades and Labour Council. For years he has been president of the National Union of General Workers, and chairman of the National Federation of Labourers' Unions.

In the House of Commons on June 6, he said of his job: "The joint efforts at the ministry of a peer of the realm (Lord Rhondda) and an ordinary laborer might be regarded as an extraordinary combination," and went on, in a quick survey of food control in the island commonwealth as it had been carried forward in the teeth of U-boats and food profiteers, of the "queue" agitation of the Northcliffe press, on the one hand, and local labor demonstrations on the other. As an exhibit of both responsible administration and social policy, which will weigh in the balance in the trust which the English people comes to place in the political labor movement, what he said may well be quoted here:

As to meat, the position was that they had eliminated all competition and all profiteering. Rich and poor were placed substantially on the same level. This had gone far to restore the confidence of the community in regard to the food situation. The meat problem in a nutshell was this: they had to arrange that the required number of beasts and sheep should be killed in 14,000 slaughterhouses, and delivered, together with their proportion of frozen meat, to 52,000 retailers' shops through 2,000 local food committee areas, and that must be done at the right moment, or as near that as possible, in order to supply the demands of 40,000,000 consumers. It was not too much to say that the meat coupon was honored as surely as is the British bank-note.

An aspect of the milk problem was that of distribution. During the war there had grown up in this trade several combines of very great power. It has been agreed that the ministry must become responsible for the wholesale collection, utilization and distribution of milk.

Practically the whole of this year's fruit crop must be reserved for the jam manufacturers.

Between 20 and 30 different raw materials are included under the head of oils, fat and margarine. The productive capacity of the margarine industry in this country has increased fourfold during the war, and we are now entirely independent of foreign supplies.

Storage capacity has been increased from 32,000,000 to 35,000,000

cubic feet. By the end of this year, our cold storage places will show an increase of 25 per cent upon their pre-war capacity.

We have now 535 national food kitchens, and are negotiating with local authorities for the establishment of an additional 500.

We have never believed that we could do much that would be popular; but we do desire to avoid doing anything that would be harmful or unnecessary. We want to let the flow of trade go its usual course if that flow is consistent with the needs of the community. If it is not, there must be checks and there must be interference and immediate action by the Ministry of Food.

It is with Clynes that Hoover dealt in reckoning with England in striking a war time equilibrium in the world's food supply. And it is with Clynes that British labor dealt, in the last analysis, in striking its balance in supporting the war and at the same time projecting its alternative working class policies, domestic and foreign.

To one who saw him in action at this June conference, he carried conviction that he never would leave the trade union movement and the Labour Party. He would never join a "split," never lend himself to a *Morning Post* trade union party. He would always test his own position by an appeal to a working class constituency. He would abide by their decision. If any one thought he could be used to break the labor movement, that person did not know Clynes. The marks of the sufferings of his early life are on him. He is of the working class. He will die in their ditch. If organized labor pulled him out of the government, he would come. But he would put up a stiff ingenious fight before he came, and would possibly convert it to his ideas. For he believes in both propaganda and administrative work. He believes in labor when it is declamatory, and dissident, and he believes in it when it enters on executive responsibility. He understands Smillie and Walter Appleton, Snowden and Havelock Wilson. He is the greatest success of the labor movement in government work. One left the conference feeling that honest, saddened George Barnes might drop out in the next shuffle, for he had lost the knack of popular appeal. But Clynes would continue in power, until the parting of the ways, for the government of Britain had need for him. He is mentally agile but sincere. He is pure proletarian. If labor should come to power in the next years, as the Tories forebode, Clynes no less than Thomas and Henderson, and with greater experience in public administration than either, would be timber for the premiership. Any man that could hold his popularity after rationing food could harmonize a cabinet. To these names, if the central leaders should be frustrated in their moderate course in a period of dragging peace or of sharp cleavages in the period of reconstruction, were to be added Smillie and Mac-

Donald. And at risk of restating from a different angle, some of the developments already covered and some also to be taken up in later chapters, it is important in our interpretation of the crystallizations of British labor thought, to quote an interview which this government labor leader, yet active member of the new majority, gave the writer at the close of this London meeting in June. Clynes said:

The Reform Bill has been carried, thus preparing the way for the General Election. The Bill tends to strengthen labor. All the parties are preparing for the test of strength. It is only natural for labor to secure freedom in order to test its strength. The breaking of the truce does not register the slightest tendency to lessen the support by labor of the government in its war-making.

On the international situation, the attitude of labor is scarcely to be distinguished from that of President Wilson in interpreting the aims of America. Labor has held special conferences on the international situation. And also the labor and socialist forces of the allied nations have held conferences. Although America was not represented, we have had the benefit of conversations with American delegates of labor, and the results of our previous conferences were quite in keeping with the speeches of the American delegates, and completely in line with the expressions of President Wilson.

Our inter-Allied program declared that a German victory would be a disaster and defeat for democracy, and that such an aggression as Germany was guilty of upon Belgium cannot be tolerated by a democracy. Germany has shown by her policy in Russia (at Brest-Litovsk and after) that moral appeals are of no avail, and that force is the only doctrine which Germany recognizes. The inter-Allied memorandum held that settlements, properly made, would settle internal affairs and international relations. Having laid down such a program, it has been proclaimed to the peoples of Germany and Austria. It is for them to reply whether they follow democratic principles and laws of consent, instead of the joint power of kaisers and armaments. Working-class opinion will not tolerate any international talks about not waging the war to the end, unless the peoples of Germany and Austria signify their willingness and agreement to these pronouncements of Allied opinion which date back as far as February, 1915.

For several reasons, of working and wage conditions, discontent has arisen, and enmity to the government, among certain groups. And that hostility to the government has been set up as hostility to the organized resistance of the government against Germany. It is essential to distinguish here between enmity to the government and the continuing unity of working class opinion on war policy.

The action of certain local labor and socialist bodies, undermining the labor members of the Government, has provoked the retaliation of the threat to start a purely trade union political party. Our

own desire is to regard these differences as temporary and subordinate. The unity of the nation cannot be maintained without unity of the parties—certainly not without the unity of the Labour Party. It is therefore unlikely that there will be very much response to the suggestion of starting a trade union political party. But the protests may do good in showing a resentment against the action taken by certain local labor and socialist bodies in their attacks on labor men in the government.

Recently an editor had attacked Clynes. Controversy is one of the things he does best. He said:

*Dear Sir,*

In your last issue you indicate that I "even went so far as to say that labor could not produce enough able men to form a government." I send you this note chiefly to deny this statement. Even if I thought it was so, no labor man need go out of his way to say such a thing, as I hope that enough able men will in due course be found in the ranks of labor fit for any national duty to which labor might be called.

And further:

You state that "the government has mocked at every suggestion of discussing peace on the great basic principles laid down by President Wilson, and has rejected with contempt eight or nine peace offers." Such statements as these are doing great mischief. They are wholly untrue. If they were correct, I can assure you that important as administrative work may be I could accept no responsibility in a government which would mock at suggestions of Peace on the principles of the American President. Immediately after reading your article, I read the speech of the Prime Minister in France last Friday and if you refer to the speech you will find that Mr. Lloyd George said, "If the kaiser and his advisers will accept the conditions voiced by the president they can have peace with America, peace with France and peace with Great Britain to-morrow."

I trouble you with this note, because the nearer labor approaches an era of responsibility, the nearer labor should keep to absolute facts in discussing issues of such tremendous import to all of us.

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Parenthetically it may well be noted here that it was not until the war was won, with the general election still to come, that the Labour Party called its members out of the government. This, with the armistice signed and the general election set for December it did on November 14, 1918. Barnes, defeated for the Labour

Party nomination in his own constituency, threw in his lot with the new Lloyd George coalition; Clynes argued in the November party conference against the resolution, but responded to it, withdrew from the coalition and campaigned for labor. [Page 269.]

So long as Prussian militarism kept the field, as foe to the nation, labor kept the faith and held to the all-England alignment. Then it made its clean cut break with the war-time coalition in order, for better or worse, to enter the peace on its own footing and with its worker's program for national and international reconstruction.



## CHAPTER XIII

### LABOR AND THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

"THERE are bushels of them piled up on the floor. We have never had such a mail," said James Middleton at the Labour Party headquarters, 1 Victoria Street, London, the Monday following the Nottingham meeting. Middleton is assistant secretary; which is official language for Henderson's right hand. The public will, perchance, never know what the labor leaders know—how much in actual execution of their political and international offensives has hung on the deft ministration of this indefatigable, unobtrusive man with the details at his finger tips. Under various titles and in quaint disguises, you can find him and his kind if you dig deep enough into any organized social movement that, against all the prophets, seems to run on some innate momentum of its own. The bushels of mail were requests for copies of the report on reconstruction issued the week before, under the title *Labour and the New Social Order*.<sup>1</sup> Few committee reports have ever so struck fire in the public imagination at home and abroad.

Its reprint as a supplement by the *New Republic* in March, 1918, led to the circulation of thousands of copies in the United States. It was hailed by radicals everywhere, and stimulated such progressive thinkers as Winston Churchill to explore the possibilities of an American contribution<sup>2</sup> which would reflect our less stratified social composition, and would approach the future from the standpoint of the community as a whole. Some of the more progressive labor bodies—from state federations in the far northwest to independent unions in New York—set out to spread the British program. The American Socialist Party—at the extreme left on the war issues—and the Social Democratic League—its pro-war offshoot to the extreme right—brought out domestic platforms in advance of the fall elections (1918), which were clearly attempts to parallel its success in attracting public attention. The American Federation of Labor, at its annual convention in June, was bare of any "glorious reconstruction ideal . . . painted by any word brush," to use Gompers' phrases, and seemed strangely inhibited from ad-

<sup>1</sup> Appendix IV.

<sup>2</sup> "A Traveller in War Time" (1918).

dress itself to the larger economic issues growing out of the war. Provision was made, however, for the appointment of a committee to take up the subject of reconstruction. Similar provision had already been arranged for in the spring (on a joint basis for employers and employees) by one of the subsidiary bodies of the National Civic Federation, which was all of a twitter lest the socialists and the Bolsheviki should meddle up America after the war.

In the United States, the British statement, indeed, provoked dissent from organizers of big business and big labor alike. In arranging a meeting for its discussion, the secretary of the Boston City Club found a copy on the desk of the president of the largest public service corporation in the country, swept clean of everything else but an inkwell and this British statement which he regarded as the most brilliant prospectus he had ever read, a challenge to American capitalists to match it with a large scale scheme for national development which would counter at a tangent its revolutionary bent. Soon after the report was given out, the *American Federationist*, the organ of the American Federation of Labor, called it "comprehensive, fine in spirit, tremendously hopeful in outlook." Americans instinctively recoil at the wording "workers by hand or by brain"; it rubs our democratic feeling the wrong way of the fur. But while resenting the "invidious distinction implied in the phrase used in the British document," Gompers editorially served notice that on this side of the water wage-earners are entirely competent "to determine and formulate their own policies" without alloy of what "in other countries" are called "the intellectuals." The American labor movement was to be kept *bonafide*, and the British policy of expanding and appealing to a wider constituency struck no answering chord.

Also, in pointing out that the British document formulated the problems "as political issues and the agency designated is the political party," Gompers reaffirmed his life-long policy that wage-earners should exert themselves through the unions rather than through a political labor movement. More, he has acted on the principle that they should not, by coming to depend too much on labor legislation, weaken the organized power of a strong dues-paying membership to bargain for standards in trade agreements. Thus, he has opposed agitation to secure eight hour laws (as shifting reliance from the unions to the government); he was slow to take up the workmen's compensation movement in its early days, and he threw his weight against public schemes for sickness insurance—a position on which the New York State Federation of Labor, for example, broke with him. Underneath it all, Gompers has accepted

the present capitalistic order, if tempered by collective bargaining. While resisting movements to create a labor party and preferring to use the potential political strength of the labor movement to force gains first from the Republicans and then the Democrats, he has consistently fought socialism and all its works.

"The heart of the American labor movement is economic," he said in discussing the British Labour Party's report. "Labour's welfare and protection is regarded as fundamentally an economic problem to be dealt with by economic agencies." And again—

The democracy of the American labor movement is of the same nature as that of our republic. It is more hearty, more sincere, and more far-reaching than the democracy of any other country.

So the American reader finishes the document entitled *Labor and the New Social Order* with a feeling of exultation stirred by the hope of what the future may bring, but when he turns to concrete problems that must be worked out to-day and to-morrow, and through each day that follows, he finds little practical help for real achievements. In the future, as in the past, we must trust in the economic organization of the workers.

In Great Britain, on the contrary, as brought out in the last chapter, the political movement long since proved its worth to the minds of the workers. During a period of thirty years, the emphasis has swung to and fro between the economic and political fields of activity, as labor has been thwarted in one, or had its hopes dashed in the other. But out of gains, first in one direction and then in the other, had come reliance on the two methods—not as things antagonistic, but as things complementary—(a dual procedure which, incidentally, made a two-edged war policy fit into their habit of mind).

Now, at a time when, as we shall see more clearly in later pages, the familiar economic machinery of collective bargaining had been "interned" for the war, the political arm of the labor movement came forward with its vigorous presentment of political action. The circumstances would have won for it in any case a working-class following far out-numbering the membership of the Labour Party. But with the general ferment affecting all sorts and conditions of men—and with no such comprehensive social program put forth by any of the older parties,—the labor report on reconstruction fairly hit the British public between the eyes.

It came before the party conference in June after four months' discussion by unions, trades councils and party locals, and was given effect by a series of 27 resolutions. In make-up and temper,

this June meeting made much the same impression upon the joint author of this book as the Nottingham meeting had made on his collaborator. His rough notes contained four phrases which he scribbled down in the thick of the conference as giving its feel to an outsider. These phrases were "gray hairs," "common sense," "win the war," "our country."

*"Gray hairs"*: The conference, while containing young men and many men still in young middle life, was for the majority made up of men going gray, settled, mature. For young leadership, it would be necessary to wait until the war was ended.

*"Common sense"*: The appeal that infallibly won the conference was not to the emotions. It was not that of cleverness. It was the hard, plain statement of the commonsense position. British labor distrusts the extremist, and this applies as much to those on the right, the Tory reactionary, the military Jingo, as to the revolutionary and the extreme pacifist. This is where American labor visitors made their mistake. They saw that extremists like the Bolshevik ambassador from abroad or Havelock Wilson of the British sailors received freedom of speech. The British worker applauds any honest, sincere statement. He gives his respect to any good fighter. But he gives his vote and his intellectual allegiance to the middle-of-the-way man who shows a working compromise.

*"Win the War"*: An earlier chapter brought out how this June meeting reaffirmed the war policy of British labor—its linking of a moral and political offensive with resistance to Prussian militarism in the field. It expressed its will to win the war, from the keynote opening speech of the chairman to the angry vigor of its resolution for a substantial increase in the separation allowances for the families of fighting men. Nothing so stirred the wrath of the labor conference as the report of official slights to the discharged soldiers. There were cries of shame when a delegate told of 742 soldiers and their dependents in one district on charity under a poor law board of guardians.

*"Our Country"*: They have a great pride in their country, these English labor men. Underlying every sharp criticism of government policy was the love of the Briton for his native land. British labor will never be international in the sense of a disappearance of the instinct of nationality.

Each of these characteristics found illustration in speeches from the floor by delegates. As the reconstruction plan had been before the constituent bodies for six months and the resolutions were kindred to those passed at earlier party conferences, they went through swiftly with little debate. Right, left and center on the war issues, were at one on the reconstruction program. Said Presi-



dent Purdy (Shipconstructors and Shipwrights' Association, 33,000 members) at the opening session:

All plans of reconstruction, all hopes of rebuilding a better social and industrial life after the war, depend on one cardinal fact, and that is winning the war. The trade union and labor movement have declared that they want no inconclusive peace. This is no time to divide forces, whether inside or outside the party. The way to consolidate the party is not by forming a new party.

We need the industrial wing to be allied to the political wing of the movement. But a national party, such as is now aimed at, cannot be built up on a purely industrial or craft basis. A strong industrial organization, backed up by a strong political labor party, is the only hope of the workers in the future.

Said Ramsay MacDonald:

We are divided on certain current issues, but not on issues of reconstruction. Capitalism is characterized by inefficiency and waste, by managers who can't manage. A pool of all the little exploitations will make a reservoir of plenty. Internationally, we are not out for a balance of power (as in the Whitley report in industry), nor for a League of Powers—but for a Society of Nations.

These resolutions on reconstruction make no attempt to repeat our constitution; they are elaborate footnotes to the constitution.

Of the reconstruction program as a whole, J. H. Thomas (Railwaymen, 400,000 members) said that the workers recognized the miserable poverty and degradation in which they had lived in the past. If the nation could spend eight millions in pounds sterling a day in the destruction of humanity it could find some millions for reconstruction. He pointed out that eleven million people would need employment when the war ends:

The employers will make the effort to rid themselves of abnormal wages. The cost of living cannot be reduced. So we shall have

- (1) a glut in the labor market.
- (2) an annual debt of six hundred million pounds.
- (3) increased cost of living.
- (4) a tendency to cut wages.

The success of the Labour Party will depend on solving some of these great problems. It means the taking over of railways, mines, munition factories. Unrestricted competition and individual direction were found a menace in time of war. So we point out that as regards the mass of human beings they are wrong in peace. Individuals cannot be trusted to control that of which they don't believe in the policy. The danger to labor is not that it will be defeated by strength and wealth but by intrigues of its own.



## LABOR'S PLAN FOR RECONSTRUCTION

Report and resolutions are published in the appendix to this book.<sup>1</sup> The former must be read in full to get the sweep and spirit of its message. No attempt can be made here to debate the main propositions, ranging as they do over the entire field of economics and domestic affairs, just as no attempt was made earlier to debate British labor policy with respect, for example, to disarmament of the Balkans. Our task is the simpler one of interpreting the general development and intention of the movement. But to do that it is necessary to grasp its approach to the common task of reconstruction, as put in the smashing indictment which opened the document:

We need to beware of patchwork. The view of the Labour Party is that what has to be reconstructed after the war is not this or that government department, or this or that piece of social machinery; but, so far as Britain is concerned, society itself. The individual worker, or for that matter the individual statesman, immersed in daily routine—like the individual soldier in a battle—easily fails to understand the magnitude and far-reaching importance of what is taking place around him. How does it fit together as a whole? How does it look from a distance? Count Okuma, one of the oldest, most experienced and ablest of the statesmen of Japan, watching the present conflict from the other side of the globe, declares it to be nothing less than the death of European civilization. Just as in the past the civilizations of Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Carthage and the great Roman Empire have been successively destroyed, so, in the judgment of this detached observer, the civilization of all Europe is even now receiving its death-blow. We of the Labour Party can so far agree in this estimate as to recognize, in the present world catastrophe, if not the death, in Europe, of civilization itself, at any rate, the culmination and collapse of a distinctive industrial civilization, which the workers will not seek to reconstruct. At such times of crisis it is easier to slip into ruin than to progress into higher forms or organizations. That is the problem as it presents itself to the Labour Party to-day.

What this war is consuming is not merely the security, the homes, the livelihood and the lives of millions of innocent families, and an enormous proportion of all the accumulated wealth of the world, but also the very basis of the peculiar social order in which it has arisen. The individualist system of capitalist production, based on the private ownership and competitive administration of land and capital, with its reckless "profiteering" and wage-slavery; with its glorification of the unhampered struggle for the means of life and its hypocritical pretence of the "survival of the fittest"; with the

<sup>1</sup> Report, Appendix IV; resolutions, Appendix V.

monstrous inequality of circumstances which it produces and the degradation and brutalization, both moral and spiritual, resulting therefrom, may, we hope, indeed have received a death-blow. With it must go the political system and ideas in which it naturally found expression. We of the Labour Party, whether in opposition or in due time called upon to form an administration, will certainly lend no hand to its revival. On the contrary, we shall do our utmost to see that it is buried with the millions whom it has done to death. If we in Britain are to escape from the decay of civilization itself, which the Japanese statesman foresees, we must insure that what is presently to be built up is a new social order, based not on fighting but on fraternity—not on the competitive struggle for the means of bare life, but on a deliberately planned coöperation in production and distribution for the benefit of all who participate by hand or by brain—not on the utmost possible inequality of riches, but on a systematic approach towards a healthy equality of material circumstances for every person born into the world—not on an enforced dominion over subject nations, subject races, subject colonies, subject classes, or a subject sex, but, in industry, as well as in government, on that equal freedom, that general consciousness of consent, and that widest possible participation in power, both economic and political, which is characteristic of democracy. We do not, of course, pretend that it is possible, even after the drastic clearing away that is now going on, to build society anew in a year or two of feverish "Reconstruction." What the Labour Party intends to satisfy itself about is that each brick that it helps to lay shall go to erect the structure that it intends, and no other.

What, then, do the British workers stand for in building their new house "upon the common foundation of the democratic control of society in all its activities"?

They stand in the first place for some things on which the general American public would back them up without question.

They stand for free public education—and they stand for it for the children of the whole working class—for all the children of Great Britain. Secondary and higher schools are not free schools in England. The elementary schools are inadequate in numbers, teachers, curriculum. The workers are out for an educational system comparable with the best America has to offer from kindergarten to university, free, public, as a basis for fitting the oncoming generation of British workers to run England.

They are out for a ministry of health and a radical reorganization of the whole scheme of building up the physical fitness of their own kind, such as the recruiting experience had shown was all too much needed. They stand out, to use Sidney Webb's phrase, "for the universal enforcement of the national minimum;" for the strengthening of the factory, compensation and insurance acts gov-

erning hours, health, unemployment and the like: in other words, to lay a floor of standards beneath which no industrial operations shall be carried on in England. They stand for giving an entirely new embodiment to home life among the workers of Great Britain by far-reaching housing and city building schemes, and they speak in terms of a million new cottages and an outlay of three million sterling for rehousing in mining villages, rural districts and town slums.

They sensed an attempt to reduce wages when the troops come home, to take advantage of the dislocation of demobilization to worsen the conditions of employment and to leave to private charity the handling of unemployment. They call for a revolution of the poor law and for deliberate national organization to meet unemployment in advance, by public works in housing, school building, transport and road building, afforestation and the breaking up of great estates into coöperative small holdings; by raising the school-leaving age to sixteen, by shortening the hours of labor of young persons and by initiating the universal eight-hour day.

In the political field, the party stands for the complete removal of all the wartime restrictions on "freedom of speech, freedom of publication, freedom of the press, freedom of travel, freedom of choice of place of residence, and freedom of employment the day after peace is declared." To quote a speaker on the floor of the June conference:

A man with his hand crippled has been in prison for two years for refusing military examination, because he is a conscientious objector. He is now doing time in a stone quarry. When the names of our heroes at the front are placed on a monument in some fair square of the city, may the names of the conscientious objectors be there, beside them.

It cannot be said the workers as a whole understood or sympathized with the principles of the conscientious objectors, much less shared their feelings. But they understood and were aroused by the treatment accorded them in prison. That awakened old echoes of the treatment accorded labor leaders in the long struggle for the right to organize, and it provoked the quick recognition that without their organized power, their own strike leaders in wartime would have been handled no differently.

In the debates at the June conference, working-class resistance to any attempt to carry over military methods into the industrial life, or perpetuate them under a peace economy was voiced by W. C. Anderson, member of Parliament from the Independent Labour Party (left):

The new spirit requires new machinery, and labor ought to give a clear lead. The military service acts are being used more and more for industrial conscription. Labor must conquer the government. Labor must be the government. Labor must make the laws, not for a small section, but for the whole community.

He spoke of the new grades of military service for the ages of forty-one years to fifty-one years:

They believe they will be sent to the front. The government says to them, "If you will place yourselves in our power and be sent anywhere we say, you will be exempted from military service." This is industrial compulsion. Either they should be sent into the army or be left free as a civilian.

Labor is of one mind with respect to peace time conscription, military no less than industrial. It took its stand against "any continuation of the military service acts a moment longer than the imperative requirements of the war excuse."

But "individual freedom is of little use without complete political rights." The Labour Party

sees its repeated demands largely conceded in the present representation of the people act, but not yet wholly satisfied. The party stands, as heretofore, for complete adult suffrage . . . effective provision for absent electors to vote, for absolutely equal rights for both sexes, for the same freedom to exercise civic rights for the common soldier as for the officer, for shorter parliaments, for the complete abolition of the House of Lords, and for a most strenuous opposition to any new second chamber, whether elected or not, having in it any element of heredity or privilege, or of the control of the House of Commons by any party or class.

Labor stands for absolute autonomy of each self-governing part of the Empire, for "home rule all around," and for an imperial council which would express the democratized spirit of "the *Britannic Alliance*."

We now come to the larger economic proposals on which there is bound to be much friction. "What the nation needs is undoubtedly a great bound onward on its aggregate productivity." But this to labor's mind

cannot be secured merely by pressing the manual workers to more strenuous toil, or even by encouraging the "Captains of Industry" to a less wasteful organization of their several enterprises on a profit-making basis.

What the Labour Party looks to is:



A genuinely scientific reorganization of the nation's industry, no longer deflected by individual profiteering, on the basis of the common ownership of the means of production; the equitable sharing of the proceeds among all who participate in any capacity and only among these, and the adoption, in particular services and occupations, of those systems and methods of administration and control that may be found, in practice, best to promote, not profiteering, but the public interest.

To this end the party stands "not merely for the principle of common ownership of the nation's land, but for a unified national service of communication and transport, to be worked unhampered by capitalist, private, or purely local interests (and with a steadily increasing participation of the organized workers in the management, both central and local) exclusively for the common good"; for the erection of a score of gigantic super-power stations, "which would generate, at incredibly cheap rates, enough electricity for the use of every industrial establishment and every private household in Great Britain"; for "the immediate nationalization of mines, the extraction of coal and iron being worked as a public service (with a steadily increasing participation in the management, both central and local, of the various grades of persons employed)." The workers want household coal of standard quality, at "a fixed and uniform price for the whole kingdom, payable by rich and poor alike, as unalterable as the penny postage stamp." Similarly, they advocate the expropriation of the profit-making industrial insurance companies which "now so tyrannously exploit the people with their wasteful house-to-house industrial life assurance," and they advocate local option and "taking the entire manufacture and retailing of alcoholic drink out of the hands of those who find profit in promoting the utmost possible consumption."

The party takes ground against allowing the government control over the importations of wheat, wool, metals and other commodities to "slip back into the unfettered control of private capitalists, who are, actually at the instance of the government itself, now rapidly combining, trade by trade, into monopolist trusts, which may presently become as ruthless in their extortion as the worst American examples." To quote:

Standing, as it does, for the democratic control of industry, the Labour Party would think twice before it sanctioned any abandonment of the present profitable centralization of purchase of raw material; of the present carefully organized "rationing" by joint committees of the trades concerned, of the several establishments with the materials they require; of the present elaborate system of "costing" and public audit of manufacturers' accounts, so as to stop



the waste heretofore caused by the mechanical inefficiency of the more backward firms; of the present salutary publicity of manufacturing processes and expenses hereby insured; and, on the information thus obtained (in order never again to revert to the old time profiteering), of the present rigid fixing, for standardized products, of maximum prices at the factory, at the warehouse of the wholesale trader and in the retail shop.

Labor holds that it is just as much the function of the government to protect private consumers as to protect, through the factory acts, the wage earning producers.

To provide the revenue to meet the cost of the war and to make the constructive investment for national production outlined, the Labour Party repudiates all proposals for a protective tariff, strenuously opposes any taxation which would increase the price of food, and objects to any taxes interfering with production, commerce, transport or communication. Rather, it turns its eyes on the holdings of what it describes as "that one-tenth of the population which owns nine-tenths of the riches of the United Kingdom." It would extend the Excess Profits Tax, increase the Mineral Rights Duty and bring "the steadily rising unearned increment of urban and mineral land . . . wholly . . . into the public exchequer." It stands for paying off the national debt by the direct taxation of private fortunes both during life and after death. It proposes to rearrange the "whole taxation of inheritance from the standpoint of asking what is the maximum amount that any rich man should be permitted at death to divert by his will from the national exchequer which should normally be the heir of all private riches in excess of a quite moderate amount by way of family provision." It stands for a special capital levy to pay off a very substantial part of the entire national debt.<sup>1</sup> It stands, in fine, for taking over the

<sup>1</sup> When the issue of conscription of wealth was raised by labor it met with a striking response from the leader of the Unionist party. Bonar Law, Chancellor of the Exchequer, was quoted in the London *Times* of December 26, 1917, as saying: "I am inclined to take this view that we ought to aim at making this burden (of national debt) one which will rest practically on the wealth that has been created and is in existence at the time the war comes to an end, so that it would not be there as a handicap on the creation of new wealth after the war. The question of whether or not there should be conscription of wealth, then, is entirely a matter of expediency. In my opinion, it is simply a question of whether it will pay them [the wealthy classes] best, and pay the country best, to have a general capital levy, and reduce the national debt as far as you can, or have it continued for 50 years as a constant burden of taxation. My own feeling is that it would be better, both for the wealthy classes and the country, to have this levy of capital, and reduce the burden of the national debt."

national surplus—whether piled up in the past or created currently—as new social capital.

Such a revolution in national finance would provoke bitter antagonisms. Probably no other single plank in the labor platform is so hotly disputed. The capitalistic order of society in its untrammelled form would disappear under the rigorous applications of this new “democratic finance.” It is its proposals for the conscription of wealth which distinguishes the labor platform most clearly from the platform of the Tory state socialists, like Lord Milner, the Prussian-Australians, like Hughes, and the old-line Liberals, like Asquith.

In contrast to the picture of Old England drawn at the outset, the British workers’ document put the vision of the England they were fighting for:

In the disposal of the surplus above the standard of life society has hitherto gone as far wrong as in its neglect to secure the necessary basis of any genuine industrial efficiency or decent social order. We have allowed the riches of our mines, the rental value of the lands superior to the margin of cultivation, the extra profits of the fortunate capitalists, even the material outcome of scientific discoveries—which ought by now to have made this Britain of ours immune from class poverty or from any widespread destitution—to be absorbed by individual proprietors; and then devoted very largely to the senseless luxury of an idle rich class. Against this misappropriation of the wealth of the community, the Labour Party—speaking in the interests not of the wage-earners alone, but of every grade and section of producers by hand or by brain, not to mention also those of the generations that are to succeed us, and of the permanent welfare of the community—emphatically protests. One main pillar of the house that the Labour Party intends to build is the future appropriation of the surplus, not to the enlargement of any individual fortune, but to the common good. It is from this constantly arising surplus (to be secured, on the one hand, by nationalization and municipalization and, on the other, by the steeply graduated taxation of private income and riches) that will have to be found the new capital which the community day by day needs for the perpetual improvement and increase of its various enterprises, for which we shall decline to be dependent on the usury-exacting financiers.

It is from the same source that has to be defrayed the public provision for the sick and infirm of all kinds (including that for maternity and infancy) which is still so scandalously insufficient; for the aged and those prematurely incapacitated by accident or disease, now in many ways so imperfectly cared for, for the education alike of children of adolescents and of adults, in which the Labour Party demands a genuine equality of opportunity, overcoming all differences of material circumstances; and for the organization of public improvements of all kinds, including the brightening

of the lives of those now condemned to almost ceaseless toil, and a great development of the means of recreation. From the same source must come the greatly increased public provision that the Labour Party will insist on being made for scientific investigation and original research, in every branch of knowledge, not to say also for the promotion of music, literature and fine art, which have been under capitalism so greatly neglected, and upon which, so the Labour Party holds, any real development of civilization fundamentally depends.

Society, like the individual, does not live by bread alone—does not exist only for perpetual wealth production. It is in the proposal for this appropriation of every surplus for the Common Good—in the vision of its resolute use for the building up of the community as a whole instead of for the magnification of individual fortunes—that the Labour Party, as the Party of the Producers by hand or by brain, most distinctively marks itself off from the older political parties, standing, as these do, essentially for the maintenance, unimpaired, of the perpetual private mortgage upon the annual product of the nation that is involved in the individual ownership of land and capital.

Of course many of these proposals were not new. The capital levy was more startling, but land reform, workmen's compensation, re-housing and the like were pushed by Lloyd George and Asquith piece-meal under the old liberal régime; the war had written unheard-of tax laws. The industrial minimums were very similar to those of the Progressive Party platform six years before in the United States. Socialist parties in a score of countries have belabored as hard or harder the infelicities of the system of private capitalism. But here we had, as distinct from pre-war liberal procedure, a rounded program; and as distinct from the socialist procedure, one on which the general voter was asked to join, not on the basis of subscribing to a creed but on the basis of objective, particular measures.

It was, however, the kick behind it which gave the Labour Party program its hearing—the realization that England would not go back to the old loose-jointed scheme of things after the war, that there was tremendous industrial unrest throughout the Kingdom and that there were many indications that the soldiers were coming back in a temper to join forces with the workers.

Announcement was made at the June conference that the Labour Party would contest 400 seats for the next Parliament. As the labor leaders saw it, they were confronted with something more dynamic than a contest with the historic English parties—with prospect of nothing less than a new political formation under the Premier. The situation was summed up by a radical labor leader in this way:

Lloyd George's old associates in the labor movement mistrust him, so that it is scarcely likely that he can win them back again as his followers. He has no temperamental commonality with the Tories, and they would not be displeased if he were not so formidable a figure in domestic affairs after the war. The liberals accuse him of treachery to Asquith and the first raters among them did not go into his cabinet. There remains his personal following and when you realize that some 35,000 people have been added to the newly created orders, you can see that that is not inconsiderable as a nucleus for a new party. Lloyd George lacks everything just now but courage.

—Courage, yes, and a widespread public conviction that however you disagreed with him or his colleagues, he, as no other man in England, could marshal her forces against Germany—if the war were still on; the prestige of the great war leader—if it were successfully ended; the backing, in either case, of the great interests built up during the war, the suction-force of a khaki election, and the prowess of the most redoubtable campaigner the English radical movement ever produced. No mean rival, in truth, if personality rather than platform were to be the test.

What could be attempted in those war months was to gauge certain of the currents at work in the British citizenship which would continue regardless of the outcome of the then anticipated election and which would tend, during a period of years, to strengthen rather than weaken the labor representation. For out of office, only less than in, the influence of the labor movement on post-bellum domestic and foreign policy will be augmented many-fold.

With respect to the wage-earners themselves, we have seen in the more active partnership of the British Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress a muster of organized labor which in numbers and unity exceeded anything in the past. The position held by Clynes in their counsels is a symbol of the great mass of unskilled general workers now ranged alongside the skilled trades. The spread of the great industrial organizations, such as the miners, embracing skilled and unskilled alike, is a response to the same forces, and in a succeeding chapter we shall see how the miners have in the course of the war come to subscribe to state ownership of industry coupled with workers' participation in the management. Every labor conference of 1918 bore testimony in the debates from the floor that the socialists of the right (who have stood for a strong war policy) had not swallowed the government's home policy. If anything, some of the trade unionists of the right were in their savage criticism of the government and their radical proposals more sweeping than socialists of the left.



## THE RETURNED SOLDIERS

With respect to the returned soldiers, the point of view of not a few detached observers was expressed by an English Y. M. C. A. worker in London, whose work brought him into personal relationship with thousands of men in khaki. He cited the Premier's famous remark that drink was a worse enemy to England than was Germany, and (in spite of the fact that many of the conservative labor men had advised against war time prohibition—lest it lead to a divided country), he reckoned the failure of the ministry to act at all as one of the strong counts against it. He felt that the men in the ranks hoped that they would come back to a changed England, to start in again on a higher plane of living and better conditions. If England wasn't changed, then, with the drag of trench life, and the general physical and mental reaction from the war, they would in the course of two or three months slip back into the old way of living.

"Will they come back revolutionists?" he was asked. They had been through this mill for their common country. When they came back would they be content to find that it wasn't common after all; that men who had borne the brunt equally came back to very unequal portions?

They would not be revolutionists, he answered, because the English are the greatest grousing nation on the face of the earth; they all talk revolution, but nobody revolves. They are a phlegmatic people. But under it all the soldiers were in key with the working class feeling.

"How was this?" he was asked. "Have the labor unions been allowed to carry on propaganda among the soldiers at the front?"

"No," he said. "And the soldiers know that; and that is one of the reasons why."

"But most of the papers talk in a very different strain. They don't publish things from the labor angle."

"No," he said, "and the soldiers know that, too, and that is another reason."

The labor movement, he believed, would be for temperance, not prohibition; it would be for radical changes in the distribution of wealth; and the soldiers would be with the workers. More especially, they would be for having a say and a big say in the government. England had been governed by squires and the propertied classes. The contention had been that the man who did not own land, did not have a stake in the country, and should not have the say. Now the soldiers would come back at them. "Because you hold the land your grandfather got," they would put it, "you say."



you have a stake in the country. Well, we've been through this hell for four years, and that gives us a stake, and we are going to use it."

There was a new spirit among the conservative classes, too, he concluded. The younger men had been out at the war and knew the Tommies; and the Tommies knew them. They had a feeling toward each other which would be a great tempering influence. But it would not stand in the way of the soldiers taking things into their own hands, and setting about a mighty shift in the scheme of English life after the war.

Which is putting in another way the point of the English fighting man returned from the Boer war, as Kipling wrote it down:

An' I'm rollin' 'is lawns for the Squire,  
*Me!*

#### THE WOMEN WORKERS

Along with its appeal to the soldiers and workers, through special legislation and through its program for the democratization of wealth, the Labour Party set out to reach the new women workers. And the hundreds of thousands of old unionists in the army are matched by tens of thousands of new unionists among the hundreds of thousands of new wage-earning women.<sup>1</sup>

In 1918, the British Trades Union Congress elected Margaret Bondfield to membership on its parliamentary committee—a status hitherto unaccorded an English woman and one not yet paralleled in America. Slight, dark, deft and direct in speech, Miss Bondfield is a foil, physically, to another leader of English women unionists, better known in the United States. Tall, blonde, vehement, Mary Macarthur (Mrs. W. C. Anderson) stands out a colorful figure from the cornice of the lions in a mass meeting in Trafalgar Square or among a knot of working girls in an industrial town. Miss Bondfield is a member of the executive of the Independent Labour Party, but it is for her rise from the ranks as an organizer, her self-schooled grasp of underlying issues, her radical social insight and her tactical skill that she is known in the labor movement—qualities which do not in themselves convey any hint of the charm of her face and personality, or of that unfagged energy of a girl ambulance driver which is hers.

In interpreting the woman's movement in industry, Miss Bondfield divided in into three parts—distributive, industrial and political.

<sup>1</sup>Mary Macarthur estimated in 1918 that, of the 4,500,000 wage earning women in commerce and industry in Great Britain, 750,000 were enrolled in trade unions.

The women's part in the distributive field dates back to the early stages of the coöperative movement. The only qualification for membership in its woman's guilds is to be a member of a co-operative society. Often a president is a middle class woman, but for the most part they are working women. They have been a real leaven in the coöperative movement—forward-looking, keeping it abreast of the times in political aims, sane on the war, and the push behind the agitation for maternity-care in Great Britain. While there are only a few leaders whose names are known the country over, there are hundreds of first rate women who are strong in their districts, and who are turned to whenever the progressive group in a community are looking, for example, for a woman member on a board of guardians or local council.

The Woman's Trade Union League dates back even further—to the early '70's, and carries us to a little known chapter in the woman's movement in the United States. Susan B. Anthony and Lucy Larcom were interested in the organization of working women. Miss Anthony, to be sure, was a pioneer in woman's rights, rather than in economic reform. She approached the question from a middle class rather than a labor point of view. She was interested in getting an opportunity for women to be self-supporting and did not meet the position of the unions by standing out for equal wages. They regarded her efforts as playing into the hands of the employers and the movement in America did not last. But an English woman, Miss Patterson, who visited America, saw the organized groups of umbrella workers and type setters, returned to England and started the Woman's Trade Union League, which, in the course of years, as a piece of international reciprocity, became the inspiration of the corresponding American league. Since the outbreak of the war, the British movement has grown with great rapidity. Mary Macarthur is secretary. It is a federation which looks after legislation affecting women workers, and does general propaganda. The men's unions are, many of them, organizing women, but do not always need a full time organizer. The league serves them as well as carries on its own organizing work.

It found numerous cases where no existing labor organization would claim or want women doing particular occupations. There were not enough of them to organize into separate unions, and the men did not want them in. This led to the organization of the National Federation of Working Women, not a federation but a union affiliated to the league like the other women's unions. Miss Macarthur is honorary secretary; Miss Bondfield, general organizer. This union has more than three times the members it had at the outset of the war. It organized many of the women in the

munitions trades, although only a fraction of the great number who swelled the industry. Its general position is to claim equal pay for equal work, and it has the very great advantage that it is in touch with the men's skilled trades. This has given it standing at a time when other labor bodies have been bidding for membership.

The Workers' Union is one of the organizations of unskilled and semi-skilled, representative of several. It will take in any worker, man or woman; but its members and organizers are familiar only with the rates and standards of the lower grades. Thus, in one district, women were introduced as crane operators and the Workers' Union, appearing before the munitions arbitration tribunal, asked for and got only thirty-two shillings a week—the unskilled rate. A short time later, the federation took up similar cases, maintained this was skilled work and got the full rate of fifty-two shillings.

So the federation includes skilled operators getting £6 to £7 a week at piece rates—women taken in to fill men's places—and girls who came under the munitions wage act and who may get scarcely more than double that number of shillings. It is to a degree an anomalous organization, but full of potentialities, and has certain advantages when the whole trade union movement is in the boiling pot, and in every branch and local there is discussion of how to reorganize the union movement to meet the situation after the war. As certain women leaders see it, the conflict in post-bellum days, growing out of "dilution," will be between the skilled and the unskilled, who have been brought in; as others see it the conflict will be primarily along sex lines unless trade board acts, factory regulations and national minimums lift unskilled women workers to the same level as that of unskilled men.

This steady work of organization, which is bringing greater and greater numbers of women wage-earners into touch with the organized labor movement, is supplemented by a political evangel. The Labour Party elected four women to its executive in June. A woman officer and two national women organizers were appointed to assist constituent organizations. The Women's Labour League agreed to a procedure at the Nottingham Conference by which it was thereafter to assist in the formation of women's sections of the local labor parties, and its journal, *Labour Women*, was taken over by the party. Through discussion, classes for organizers, and district conferences of women's sections, a general missionary work among the new voters was instituted. The relations of the Labour Party to the general suffrage movement is indicated by the following resolution adopted by the annual council (1918) of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies:

That on the occasion of the passing of the Representation of the People Bill into law, this Council of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, desires to send a message of hearty thanks to the Labour Party for their steady and consistent support of the Cause of Women's Suffrage in times past, and assures them of the firm intention of the N. U. W. S. to continue to work for the further enfranchisement of women on the same terms as it is or may be granted to men.

Similarly, the Labour Party set about enlisting not only individuals but groups hitherto outside the labor movement. Following the change in the constitution in February, it received applications from organizations which could not be classed as either trade union or socialist societies, and in June the executive asked for discretionary power to affiliate them. They ranged from political and propagandist bodies to professional associations catering to various sections of government employees, such as manual training teachers, uncertificated assistant teachers, and various clerical groups.

The full muster of the rapidly swelling ranks of trade unionism, vast reaches of unskilled workers hitherto unorganized, the civilian army, the wage-earning women, the women of the working class, professional groups—these then, and large numbers of the general population, labor is out to enlist. How far it is able to swing not only the wage earners as a body but outside groups, depends not alone on its program. Obviously the tendency will be for the older parties to match it on many of its points, and the Labour Party in turn to outflank them by further and more radical proposals. Rather, the question will be, how far vast numbers of the population come to feel that it is only through the Labour Party that they can secure accomplishment. Here the experience of the coöperative movement is significant.

#### THE COÖPERATORS

The government clearly added to labor's voting strength by subjecting the dividends of the Co-operative Societies to the excess profits tax, and by repeated attempts to bring Co-operative dividends within the scope of the income tax. As a result, the Co-operative Wholesale Society and the Co-operative Union, representing three and one-half million members, within the year, allied themselves for political action with the Labour Party.

The first food controller was Lord Davenport, a wholesale grocer, and to him the coöperatives attributed the attempt to apply the war profits tax to the annual surpluses of the coöperatives. No



doubt there were those in the government who regarded these as merely a likely source of revenue. But the coöperatives are not organized for profit. They distribute their surpluses among their members, largely working people, in order to cut down their cost of living and eliminate the very profit taking which the government tried to scoop in. It was an easy matter for them to meet the raid by simply reducing the prices to their members, and show no profits at the end of the year that could fall in the government's hopper; which they did. But the coöperatives felt that the whole thing was a put-up job of the competing commercial interests to cripple them. Lloyd George's backing of the taxation scheme identified him with the move. The coöperatives washed their hands of the Liberal party, with which they had in the past been historically a clientèle, and announced that, in order to protect their rights in the future and no less project the principle of coöperation in the period of reconstruction, they would enter politics as an organized body, run candidates for Parliament in certain districts at the next election, and work with the working class political movement. At the October, 1917, conference of coöperators, it was agreed that the aims were closer unity between the coöperative and the trade union movements, working-class funds to be used for working-class ideals, the coöperative societies to be the food stores for trade unionists who downed tools at strike time. W. H. Watkins, the Plymouth coöperator, said:

There are twenty millions directly associated with the two movements—coöperation and trade unionism.

Arthur Henderson, speaking to the coöperators at this conference, said:

One point on which we all should be determined is that when this war is terminated we shall see that the "have nots" receive a greater opportunity. We should take steps to lessen the number of sections into which democracy has been divided. I shall be prepared that the Labour Party as now known should cease to exist, if by so doing we could combine the whole of the democracy into a great people's party.

The conference unanimously adopted a draft scheme for coöperative parliamentary and municipal representation, and a resolution of policy was also unanimously carried, declaring the desire of the conference to mark its entrance into the political arena with a definite expression of general policy of industrial, social, and economic reform, which included the following aims:



- to safeguard the interests of voluntary coöperation;
- to resist legislative or administrative inequality so that, eventually, the processes of production, distribution, and exchange shall be directed to the state;
- to eliminate the profiteers or private and other speculators;
- to secure compulsory housing of the people;
- to recast the system of education on national lines, affording equal opportunity for the higher education of all;
- to effect Parliamentary control of foreign policy;
- to break down caste and class systems;
- to democratize state services;
- to abolish taxes on foodstuffs;
- to develop agriculture;
- to establish a national credit bank to facilitate the development of trade;
- to gradually demobilize soldiers and sailors from the army and navy corresponding with the needs of employment.

A Joint Committee was later formed, consisting of representatives of the Parliamentary Committee of the Co-operative Congress, the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, and the Labour Party Executive.

So we have the Trades Union Congress, with four million members, the British Labour Party with over two and one-half million members, and the Co-operatives with three and one-half million members, compacted for political action.

Since each member of the latter represents a family group (though the three organizations draw on the same families for the most part), this may well mean that two-fifths of the people of Great Britain and Ireland by mid-1918 were beginning to unite for political action. Such a process of social integration is gradual. The war unquestionably speeded it up—so much so as to give rise to prophesies of early success in terms of Parliamentary seats as numerous as seats contested. On the contrary, Alfred Zimmern of the Workers' Educational Association believes that the war caught labor twenty years ahead of its time of coming to power. Robert Smillie, head of the Miners, has stated that he looks for a labor government in ten years.

The engineer of this new alliance, with its invitation to an incalculable general following in the electorate, is the British Labour Party, the foundations of which, as we have seen, rest in trade unionism. It stands, four-square, against inequality of circumstance and opportunity. It fights against unbridled competition. It aims at coöperation. It plans to establish a standard of living. It advocates self-government in industry. Its main concern is with the distribution of the national wealth. It will interfere in-

creasingly with the present unequal distribution of the community's production. It is committed to a policy of collectivism. The protectionists, the imperialists, the reactionaries, the idle rich, the great landlords, do well to fear the rising power of the British Labour Party, for it is determined to construct a new social order. It has outgrown tinkering and patch-work, welfare devices and tepid social reforms. It has outlived an era of gentle compromises with Liberal industrialists. It has the flame of a new vision of life and labor, and it has the scientific method which the gathered and socialized intelligence of many workers by hand and brain has brought to its reconstruction program.

Briefly, the aims which gave it rebirth in 1918 were: to win the war, to establish a working-class diplomacy and a democratic peace, to become a national party and so to become the government, and to found a new England.

With these aims, it makes its appeal to the workers, the soldiers, the commoners of our day. Kipling perhaps wove a greater prophecy than he wot in his lines on "The Return" twenty years ago:

Peace is declared, an' I return  
To 'Ackneystadt, but not the same;  
Things 'ave transpired which made me learn  
The size and meanin' of the game.  
I did no more than others did,  
I don't know where the change began;  
I started as a average kid,  
I finished as a thinkin' man.  
If England was what England seems  
An' not the England of our dreams,  
But only putty, brass, an' paint,  
'Ow quick we'd drop 'er! *But she ain't!*

**PART VI**  
**CONCLUSION**



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SHOP STEWARDS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

THE swing toward the left in British labor, which we have followed in its organized front in foreign and domestic politics, showed itself still earlier in the economic field in the new movements for workers' control.

We have long had outreachings toward democracy in industry in the thrust of craft unionism, in the socialist movement for state ownership of the means of production, in the more recent syndicalist movement for producer's ownership. But there is something at work in England which can be differentiated from all three. It is manifesting itself spontaneously in the insurgency of the shop-stewards. It is manifesting itself organically in the rise of industrial unionism. It is manifesting itself deliberately in the recommendations by the Whitley Committee for industrial councils which have been adopted by the British government as the basis for its policy for industrial reconstruction; and deliberately, also, in the plans of far-sighted employers and the propaganda of the guild-socialists. These manifestations will in turn be the subjects of this and two succeeding chapters.

The rise of the shop stewards is laid in the engineering trades—the machinists, as we know them in America; the munition-makers, as the war cast them in a new rôle. In that new rôle, the women workers have been their understudies; and the fortunes of the two are, willy nilly, bound up together.

Yet, in a sense, the shop steward is offspring of the "father" (or as we call him, chairman) of the printers' chapel, an institution older than unionism itself. By usage dating back to Caxton's time, the oldest journeyman printer has represented his fellows in taking up things with the management.

At various stages in British industrial history, rough and ready shop leaders have played their part. Before the war, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (A. S. E.) had established stewards in various plants. They were the men who looked out for the interests of the union in the particular shop. They would ask a new man to show his union card and, if he had none and refused to join, then it would be made uncomfortable for him by the other union-



ists. The shop stewards would get together temporary shop committees to take up some plant grievance with the employer. The shop stewards were often fired offhand by the management if they were found out. While they were unremunerated save for perhaps a few shillings a quarter for turning in their reports, and while they stood a chance of dismissal, the prestige of their position and their fidelity to the union made it characteristic of the stewards that they were usually the most responsible, biggest-calibered men about the works. Finally, the practice reached a stage when the A. S. E. undertook to guarantee these men their wages for a year, or until they found employment elsewhere, if they were discharged for union activity. This led to the spread of the movement and under war conditions it went ahead even more rapidly.

There were several causes for this. As we shall see, the first year of the war the national unions (miners excepted) agreed not to strike and they agreed to waive all the trade union restrictions and regulations which for a generation had been built up to safeguard the status and income of skilled men. The effect of the agreement was to scrap old machines, introduce speeding up and dilute the labor force in the war trades with unskilled and semi-skilled men, women and youths. The effect was, also, to shelve the old negotiating and conciliating machinery between employers and employees just at the time that the abandonment of the rules and regulations and the influx of "dilutes" made local issues more real.

In view of the fact that these issues had thus, in war time, to be settled, not by bargaining, but by decision of the arbitration boards under the munitions act, the district trade union committees tended to side-step them and pass them up to the nationals, and the nationals to pass them on to the government tribunals. Moreover, under the war conditions, the new workers sought representation and a chance to count. The result was the growth of shop stewardism as a spontaneous groping after local remedy. It has taken many forms—sometimes the selection of a single steward for all crafts and all grades of skill as the representative of the men of a plant in meeting with their employers; sometimes the getting together of several stewards in a large plant; sometimes the getting together of the shop stewards of one district in a common committee for joint action. This brought them at various times and places into conflict with district committees, with the national unions, with the employers and with the government; conflicts which spread rather than confined the movement; conflicts which brought them individual setbacks only to break the way for newer and further incarnations of the same active principle elsewhere.

To understand these outcroppings of self-assertion at a hundred

points—which can be compared only to a new rough and ready local leadership breaking through the crusts of a stale political régime—such as the overthrow of the Whigs by the headstrong Jackson Democrats in the 20's—it is necessary to retrace some of the developments of the last four years, more in detail. It must be borne in mind, in doing so, that the war did not create English industrial unrest. It merely speeded it up along with output. In 1913, Great Britain had 1,497 strikes and lockouts, involving 688,925 workpeople, and a duration in working days of 11,630,732. In coal-mining 200,000 persons were involved, in engineering 50,000. The war intensified the causes of dispute, and in 1917, 267,000 miners were involved, and 316,000 engineering workers.

Modern big-scale standardized industry had long before the war outgrown its checks and controls, and was seeking others which would permit it to function productively, smoothly and justly. It was seeking a government of its own, autocratic or self-governing, according as you focussed attention on the big managers or on stirrings in rank and file. When the war need came to produce standardized goods swiftly, in immense quantities, the directorate and the workers could not operate under the old constitution.

The power-driven machine tool had entered industry. An automatic machine is "a machine which, after the job has been fixed, requires no hand adjustment." Specialized work is done by such machines, one person forging nuts, another superintending their tapping, a third turning their ends, a fourth shaping their sides, another hardening them, a sixth polishing them. This means, carried over a period of years, that unskilled and semi-skilled labor takes over the process from the skilled worker, who is used only to set up the machine. It means that women and children supplant the adult male.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE LOST SAFEGUARDS

Before the war the introduction of low-paid women as machine tenders had made for simmering trouble in the engineering trades. With the half million of women entering these trades (which are the munition trades) under the demands of war, the trouble boiled up. In the autumn of 1914, a great armament firm put in women on shell-making, with a wage-reduction of 50 per cent from the standard rate of men. An agreement was reached between the Employers' Federation and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, restricting female labor to purely automatic operations. The men thus conceded the right of women to take part in the process of shell-making,

<sup>1</sup> "Women in the Engineering Trades," by Barbara Drake.

but the firm did not make the corresponding concession of maintaining the wage-scale.

In February, 1915, the Government Committee on Production in Engineering and Shipbuilding proposed the Shells and Fuses Agreement, which was accepted by the employers and the trade unions. It admitted female labor to "operations on which skilled men are at present employed." The employers agreed to pay "the usual rates of the district for the operations performed." But they agreed to pay them to women taking the place of skilled men. Shell and fuse making are largely semi-skilled trades. The Employers' Federation issued a note to its members: "Female labor undertaking the work of semi-skilled or skilled men shall be paid the recognized employers sent a letter to the trade unions saying: "Female labor undertaking the work of semi-skilled and unskilled men shall be paid the recognized rates of the district for female labor on the operations in question."

This meant that the women, entering engineering and "diluting" the labor supply, were to receive a wage of about five cents an hour, and thus undercut the standard of livelihood which the Amalgamated Society of Engineers had been building up since 1851.

The A. S. E. replied: "Female labor undertaking the work of semi-skilled or unskilled men must receive the rates paid to the men they displace."

Too late. The union should have remembered earlier the semi-skilled character of the work, and not have permitted the employers to catch them napping with the word "skilled." The officials of the A. S. E. never again caught up with the situation. Multitudes of women were poured into the engineering trades at a low wage scale. The rank and file members of the union remembered from this moment on that their officials (the executive committee and the district committees) had failed to protect them at this time of crisis. From this time on, the rank and file looked to themselves, and not to their officials, for protective action against what they believed to be profiteering employers. The labor troubles of the Clyde, Coventry, and elsewhere, with the shop stewards leading them, began when the employers contrived to let the old labor leadership throw down its outer defenses by admitting women to the munition processes, and at the same time refused to safeguard the wage scale.<sup>1</sup>

On February 8, 1915, H. J. Tennant, who had been Under-Secretary of State for War, representing the government, summoned the labor leaders to organize the forces of labor, thus confessing

<sup>1</sup> See "British Industrial Experience During the War," Part III, by W. Jett Lauck. Senate Document No. 114.

the inability of the state and of the employers to conduct industry without a new partner in the control. This new partner was the trade union. This act of the government made the joint committee of men and masters a board of continuous mediation, conciliation and consultation. It conceded the husk of democratic control of industry, but what of the kernel?

Lloyd George was at this point in his varied career Chancellor of the Exchequer. In March, 1915, he called a conference at the Treasury of 33 leading trade unions. He and they drew up the Treasury Agreement. Stoppages of work were to cease; arbitration was to take the place of strikes and lockouts. The trade unions were to favor "such changes in working conditions or trade customs as may be necessary with a view to accelerating the output of war munitions or equipments."

The following were the principal features of this agreement:<sup>1</sup>

(1) The Minister of Munitions received power to control factories engaged principally on the manufacture of munitions. The control of these factories amounted to a right of the Minister of Munitions to take the plant over altogether from the owners. That right has been rarely exercised and exercised only when the management failed to comply with the requirements of the government. Such cases have been very exceptional, probably only two or three in number. As part of his powers in regard to these factories (and this actually became law) the Minister of Munitions had definite authority to limit the profits of such plants. The profits were limited to an increase of one-fifth over an average of the profits of the three years preceding.

(2) The trade unions agreed that, in view of the fact that a definite limitation had been put on profits, the wages of the employees should be fixed at the rates which existed at that time. There was to be no fluctuation upwards or downwards in the wages except by consent of the Minister of Munitions. It was agreed that neither capital nor labor should make a profit out of the nation's needs. The government, having fixed wages, appreciated that it became its duty to see that the labor so dealt with should not suffer from the increased cost of living. It set up a Committee on Production. One of the duties of this committee consisted in hearing evidence as to the increased cost of living three times every year. Evidence was brought before it by trade unions' officials, or any one concerned, and the committee had all the government statistics in regard to the increased cost of the necessities of life. Assuming that the living costs had gone up, the committee then made (in the nature of a war bonus) a national award to all employees on war work, payable by the employer, but to be recovered from the government.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Special Commission from the British Ministry of Munitions.



(3) Strikes and lockouts became illegal and arbitration became compulsory. It was agreed that any trade disputes in war industries should, for the period of the war, be submitted compulsorily to arbitration, which the government should arrange. A strike or lockout in peace time was looked upon as more or less a domestic matter. The government very rarely interfered, and only when it became a widespread inconvenience. However, the government took the view that its duties in peace time and war time were different. It took the view that its duty was to interfere between employers and employees to prevent interruption of supplies vital to the success of the armies. The government viewed this matter with such gravity that power was granted by the act to imprison for life any one who incited to strikes or interfered with the operation of the agreement. It never enforced this penalty. Public opinion was generally sufficient to enforce the act.

(4) The trade unions agreed to waive all their practices and customs which tended to restrict either employment or output, such as the employment of only union labor, and the use of only skilled persons on skilled jobs; and they promised to do their utmost to see that that agreement was carried through. They agreed also that any person, man or women, would be allowed to do any kind of work. In return for these important concessions the government pledged itself to restore pre-war conditions in shops after the war. The trade unions leaders abided loyally by that agreement and act.

In other words, labor was to give up its chief offensive weapon (the strike) by which it could achieve a drastic reconsideration of its status and standard of living, and also its system of defensive trenches (its trade union restrictions, with respect to speeding up, overtime, apprenticeship and the like) by which it could safeguard the standards it had gained in the past. In return for what? A promise, not a fulfilment:

The relaxation of existing demarcation restrictions and admission of semi-skilled or female labor shall not affect adversely the rates customarily paid for the job.

And the A. S. E. obtained the additional promise:

That the Government will undertake to use its influence to secure the restoration of previous conditions in every case after the war.

Already the majority of munition workers were women. Their interests were not directly represented. One of their spokesmen wrote to Lloyd George for a definition of "rates customarily paid."

Lloyd George said:

The words which you quote would guarantee that women undertaking the work of men would get the same piece-rate as men were receiving before the date of the agreement.



This meant that the piece-rate but not the time-rate was guaranteed. But the time-rate is the basic standard for wages, because, without a time-rate guarantee, the piece-rate can be nibbled away. Also, many operations are not on piece-work. So the Treasury Agreement did not safeguard the new unskilled workers. The result was, in the testimony of Mrs. Drake:<sup>1</sup> "The women's earnings fell to just one-half the earnings of the men, although the output of each was exactly the same."

The first Munitions of War Act incorporated this Treasury Agreement. It went further and prevented the worker from obtaining an increase in wages by leaving one factory and going to another. It prevented him by enacting that he must obtain a "leaving certificate" from his former employer, or else go idle for six weeks. The wording was this (Clause Seven): "A person shall not give employment to a workman who, within the previous six weeks, has been employed in or in connection with munition work," unless the workman held a certificate from the employer that he left work with the consent of his employer. Moreover, while this Munitions of War Act permitted the employer an advance of twenty per cent in profits over the profits of the three preceding years, it did not permit an average rise in the rate of wages sufficient to meet the rise in the cost of living. G. D. H. Cole, the Guild Socialist and labor investigator, says of it:

In the Munitions Act, the state virtually entered into a profit-sharing arrangement with the employers for the exploitation of labor, lending its disciplinary powers to the employers for the period of the war.

#### UNREST AND MITIGATIONS

Mitigations were gradually found. A Labour Supply Committee drew up a memorandum (Circular L. 2) which became a statutory order fixing a rate of wages for women. And Circular L. 3 fixed the rate of wages for semi-skilled and unskilled men. By January, 1916, the Munitions of War Amendment Act made L. 2 and L. 3 legal and mandatory in government-controlled factories.

No less than three sets of adjustment agencies were set up to which the workers could appeal.<sup>2</sup> The title of the Committee on Production was a misnomer. Some such scope may have been in mind at the time of its creation but its work has been largely in the adjustment of grievances between the employers and the men's

<sup>1</sup>"Women in the Engineering Trades," by Barbara Drake.

<sup>2</sup>This was exclusive of the Minimum Wage Boards in certain sweated trades.

unions. At first it was made up of representatives of the government merely; but under pressure from labor, its membership was expanded, and thereafter composed of nine members, three chairmen representing the public, three labor men and three employers sitting in groups of three as arbitration courts. Where the question was one involving women, it came under the munitions arbitral tribunals. It was before these bodies that general adjustments were brought, which would ordinarily come under collective bargaining. Rulings once made, if there was question as to their meaning, or the workers or employers claimed that they were being wrongly enforced, the case was reopened in the same tribunal for reinterpretation and enforcement. But when it was a simple case of whether an existing rate or decision was being observed in a given plant, the complainant turned from the national bodies to the district munitions courts. For example, if a woman was being paid forty shillings when the arbitral tribunal had awarded fifty for that kind of work, she might start proceedings just as an individual starts proceedings in a civil court for collection of a debt. The presiding officer was usually, but not always, a barrister, but lawyers were not permitted to practise before these courts. He was assisted by two assessors, one nominated by the employers, and one (if the case were that of a woman) by the National Federation of Women Workers.

A further explanation of the widening cleavage between the rank and file and the old leaders, especially those who went into the government, was the slowness with which this new wartime machinery too often functioned, coupled with the lack of consistent policy toward meeting the issues raised by the rising cost of living, by the change from time to piece rates, and by the revolutionary changes in method.

For example, the National Federation of Women Workers had endeavored for a long time to get a minimum wage ruling for a certain very large class of operatives in munitions work. The government let the thing drag unconscionably. Finally the girls at Newcastle, some thousands of them, struck. The Federation was peppered with wires and long distance telephone calls from government officials telling them that the strike was contrary to the law and insisting that they should tell the girls to go back to work. The Federation said that it had tried for months to get the government to set a minimum rate but without avail. It had not advised the girls to strike, nor would it, under the circumstances, advise them to quit striking. The issue lay between the munitions office and the strikers. Within twenty-four hours the award was granted, for this was important war work, but the award was for these

Newcastle girls alone. It took six weeks before similar rates were granted in other plants, and in each one the issue had to be raised that the rate had been granted in Newcastle. And it took four months before a general order was issued covering all work of this sort in the United Kingdom. As it was, the Newcastle girls got five pence an hour as against four pence halfpenny which was given to their less militant fellows. The result was to spread a distrust of the government's sincerity among a growing body of women who were having their first experience at wage earning.

In general we have the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organizations reporting that "the promises to munition workers generally of a fair minimum have so far materialized precisely in proportion to the energy of the organizations concerned."

To the skilled engineer his standard time-rate is everything. Even when employed regularly on piece-work or premium bonus his prices and time-limits are fixed on the basis of that rate, so as to yield a certain percentage above it—usually about 25. Mr. Lloyd George's reception on the Clyde was not promising. The men's contention was that they were not, in the circumstances, opposed to dilution (the entry of semi-skilled and unskilled workers into a skilled trade), but the guarantees and safeguards against its post-war persistence were worthless without certain conditions as to the payment of standard rates of wages, etc., and these Mr. Lloyd George did not so much as mention.

—So wrote Herbert Highton, an operative engineer and trade unionist in July, 1916.

The Fabian Research Department summed up developments in 1917 as follows:

The trade unions have abandoned their practice for the period of the war, and admit female labor to every branch of engineering concerned in munitions of war, while the employer retains his own, and continues to exploit female labor at blackleg and sweated rates of wages.

And we find the Government Commission of Inquiry into Industrial Unrest (July, 1917) presenting among the causes of unrest "inconsiderate treatment of women, whose wages are sometimes as low as 13 shillings;" and "the introduction of female labor without consultation with the workpeople."

The summary of its eight reports on industrial unrest gave as causes:

1. High food prices in relation to wages and unequal distribution of food.

2. Restrictions of personal freedom and, in particular, the effect of the munitions of war acts. Workmen have been tied up to particular factories and have been unable to obtain wages in relation to their skill. In many cases the skilled man's wage is less than the wage of the unskilled. Too much centralization in London is reported.

3. Lack of confidence in the government. This is due to the surrender of trade-union customs and the feeling that promises as regards their restoration will not be kept. It has been emphasized by the omission to record changes of working conditions under Schedule II, article 7, of the munitions of war act.

4. Delay in settlement of disputes. In some instances 10 weeks have elapsed without a settlement, and after a strike has taken place the matter has been put right in a few days.

5. Operation of the military service acts.

6. Lack of housing in certain areas.

7. Restrictions on liquor. This is marked in some areas.

8. Industrial fatigue.

9. Lack of proper organization amongst the unions.

10. Lack of communal sense. This is noticeable in South Wales, where there has been a break away from faith in parliamentary representation.

11. Inconsiderate treatment of women, whose wages are sometimes as low as 13s.

12. Delay in granting pensions to soldiers, especially those in class "W" reserve.

13. Raising the limit of income-tax exemption.

14. The workmen's compensation act. The maximum of 1 pound weekly is now inadequate.

Professor Gerald Stoney, in his presidential address to the engineering section of the British Association in 1916, asserted that "apparently the whole idea of the Armament Ring" was "to make all the profit they could out of the troubles of the Empire."

All this led the worker to be distrustful of phrases about "getting on with the war," because he felt that certain employers were not getting on with the war, but were using the phrase and the emotion it kindled as a cover for stripping labor of its safeguards, guarantees and gains, built up by over a century of struggle. He was strengthened in this distrust by such evidence as the 1917 Report of the Employers' Parliamentary Council, representing printers, builders, the Shipping Federation and other organizations of employers, and urging the repeal of such legislative protections of labor as the Trades Disputes Act and the Factory Acts.

Further, the worker was rendered distrustful of phrases about "overthrowing the Prussian power" (when they came from the governing class and the reactionary press), because his freedom of



speech, his freedom of movement, and his power of collective bargaining had been lessened by the government in the Munitions of War Acts, the Defence of the Realm Act and the Military Service Acts.

The "Garton Foundation," of which Alfred J. Balfour was a trustee, pointed out that:

Many of the men who return from the trenches to the great munition and shipbuildings centers are, within a few weeks of their return, among those who exhibit most actively their discontent with present conditions. To a very large number of men now in the ranks, the fight against Germany is a fight against "Prussianism," and the spirit of Prussianism represents to them only an extreme example of that to which they object in the industrial and social institutions of their own country. They regard the present struggle as closely connected with the campaign against capitalist and class-domination at home. Unfortunately, some of the results of the war itself, such as the Munitions Acts and the Compulsion Acts, have intensified this identification of external and internal enemies. The working of these acts and the tribunals created under them has given rise to an amount of deep and widespread resentment which is the more dangerous because it is largely inarticulate. The very moderation and unselfishness shown by the responsible leaders of organized labor are looked upon by important sections of their following as a betrayal of the cause, and by some employers as a tactical opportunity.

### THE CLYDE STRIKE

This historical summary of the early years of the war lays bare what might be called the ground plan of the strikes in the engineering trades and the shop stewards movement emerging from them. It reveals why the most vigorous expression of self-government in British industry came during the war and because of the war. The principle of "self-determination" was being fought for alike in Belgium and on the Clyde. The workers could not fight for a principle on the battle front, and at the same time permit its entire abrogation on the industrial front.

When the miners remained outside the Treasury Agreement, the rank and file of other unions saw that their own leaders had signed away their collective power. Particularly in the munition trades, where the tide of "dilution" swept in, the distrust of their officials spread and grew among the trade union members.

But not only was there this war-reason why these trade union leaders had lost grip on their following. There was a reason in the organization of union labor itself. In the munition or engineer-



ing industry, the unions are the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (275,000 members), the Friendly Society of Isonfounders (30,000), the Toolmakers (30,000), steam engine-makers (over 20,000), United Machine Workers (over 20,000), Brass-workers (18,000), Electrical Trades Union (12,000) and so on. In addition there are large engineering groups in the general labor unions, numbering over 300,000. This situation makes the A. S. E. the dominant union of the munition trades. It is made up of fitters, turners, machinists, millwrights, smiths, electricians, planers, borers, slotters, pattern makers and other grades. Thus the A. S. E. is a craft union, but one composed of many kindred grades; the basis a common skill. It has 700 home branches, grouped in a series of district committees, covering each an industrial area. The Glasgow District Committee, for example, covers about 60 branches. The district committee has a measure of autonomy in framing the local industrial policy. It is composed of delegates from the branches in the district. The branch is made up of delegates from various shops. (So the policy of the branch is broken up among the various interests of these various shops.) Just as the district committee is above the branches, so the executive council is above the district committees. This executive council is the national administrative body, the cabinet of the trade union. There is also a judicial and a legislative body.<sup>1</sup>

Now, the point to note in this analysis is that the only unit of the organization close to the workers in the shop is the branch, that the branch represents many shops (with conflicting interests), and that the branch does not deal directly with the head office and central executive of the whole union, but, instead, deals with a district committee. In short, the rank and file of the A. S. E. are a long way removed from the central executive, and as result the workers have felt that they are not swiftly and directly represented by their officials. This constitution of the A. S. E. dates back to 1851. With the miners, the branch is based on the industrial unit of the coal-pit. With the engineers, the branch is based on the place where they live, not on the place where they work.

To sum up, the war, bringing in standardized machinery and the dilution of labor, endangered the standard of living of the machine shop workers. Their officials made bargains with the government, which robbed them of power. The constitution of the union made it difficult for the rank and file to be directly represented. Accordingly, they acted independently of the Treasury Agreement, of their officials, and of their constitution. They asserted the principle of local self-government in industry. They took action in the shop stewards' movement, which became the most revolutionary

<sup>1</sup> See G. D. H. Cole's "An Introduction to Trade Unionism."

movement in the industrial field. It is breaking ground from beneath for workers' control.

The rule-book of the A. S. E. says of the shop steward:

Rule 13.—Committees may also appoint shop stewards in workshops or department thereof in their respective districts, such stewards to be under the direction and control of the committee, by whom their duties shall be defined. The stewards shall be empowered to examine periodically the contribution cards of all members, and to demand that alleged members shall show their contribution cards for examination when starting work. They shall report at least once each quarter on all matters affecting the trade, and keep the committee posted with all events occurring in the various shops. They shall be paid 4s. for each quarterly report; namely, 3s. for duty performed, and 1s. for attendance and report to committee (conveners of shop stewards shall receive 6d. extra); these to be payable by the district committee. Should a shop steward be discharged through executing his duties he shall be entitled to full wage benefit. If it is necessary for stewards to attend other meetings of the committee they shall be remunerated the same as witnesses attending committee meetings.

By the terms of the A. S. E. constitution, then, the shop stewards had come to be recognized as part of the organization, but entirely under the jurisdiction of the district committees.

That sounds harmless enough. The shop steward was dues-collector, reporting to his branch and district committee. But the war pressure, already described, crushed down on the worker, rendered his central officials powerless, and created a set of conditions in the shop which made necessary continuous and immediate negotiation between the workers and their employers. The shop steward was the man who could perform this function. He was in the shop, was elected by the workers, and merely had to enlarge a function already exercised.

Here is what happened. In the Parkhead Engineering Works, there had been before the war 20 shop stewards, and, under war conditions, the number of shop stewards was increased to 60. David Kirkwood was appointed convener or chief of the shop stewards, to deal with difficulties with the management, and report grievances.

When the Munitions Act of July 2, 1915, was passed, the workers in the Clyde District (which included the Parkhead Works) formed the Clyde Workers Committee, which discussed the government's plan of dilution, and criticised the attitude of the executive officials of the A. S. E. and other unions. As one labor witness described it:

"It was more a collection of angry trade unionists than anything else, which had sprung into existence because of the trouble which was going on, on the Clyde."

"Did you think it better to go to the Clyde Workers Committee than to go to your own Trade Union officials?"

"Oh, yes. Our own Trade Union officials were hopelessly tied up. They could do nothing."

"They were tied up by whom?"

"Under the Munitions Act. Where the men in the workshop had previously sent their shop stewards to the A. S. E. to report to their district committee, the shop stewards were now sent to the Clyde Workers Committee."

This committee of shop stewards issued a manifesto saying:

The support given to the Munitions Act by the officials (of the A. S. E. and other unions) was an act of treachery to the working classes. We are out for unity and closer organization of all trades in the industry, one union being the ultimate aim. We will support the officials just so long as they rightly represent the workers, but we will act independently immediately they misrepresent them.

This Clyde Workers Committee advocated the view that the organized trade unionists should be allowed to share in the administration and control of workshop arrangements. Kirkwood, a member of this committee, asked Lloyd George if he were prepared to give the workers a share in the management of the works. Kirkwood said to Lloyd George that the workers, as socialists, welcomed dilution of labor, which they regarded as the natural development in industrial conditions. But this scheme of dilution must be carried out under the control of the workers. Without such control, cheap wages would be introduced.

There we have the philosophy of the shop stewards movement in their own words—workers' control of industry, beginning in the shop, and industrial unionism (in preference to craft unionism).

Lloyd George's conversation with Kirkwood took place in December, 1915. In the following March, came a strike in the Parkhead Works where Kirkwood was convener. As the result of the strike Kirkwood and nine others were arrested and deported outside the Clyde area, and the shop stewards movement spread over Great Britain.

The immediate cause of the strike was a dilution scheme. Women were set at work in the howitzer shop. Kirkwood and two shop stewards interviewed the women, and saw to it that they were requested to join the National Federation of Women Workers. The management of the works objected to these activities of Kirkwood, though they had used him to conciliate the workers at other times

The result of the trouble was the strike and the deportation. The domestic radicalism of the shop stewards was in some cases yoked to an internationalism which was close to pacifism. Pacifism is a militant doctrine in England, and the charges of "unpatriotic" utterances against Kirkwood and others entered into the general public's sanction of the government's methods of repression.

The Clyde trouble was the most spectacular of the cases of friction in the munition trades, but it was by no means an isolated example. Unquestionably remarkable work was being done by the Production Committee and the bodies created under the Munitions Act to bring employers and workers together. But instances in which wage awards were hung up for months at a time until the workers struck or threatened to strike spread the notion, as already indicated, that you could not get anything from the authorities because it was right but only because you had the force to compel it. The result was to provoke strikes no less than to prevent them.

Under the war law, to strike was a serious offense, and to lead or counsel or order a strike was a very serious one. As we have seen, it was not the responsible national officers of the older unions that led the strikes. They stood by the government in their agreement. But because they did not stand by the men, in the minds of many of the workers themselves, the shop stewards came up. They led the men and paid the penalty.

Here, again, in dealing with the strikes, the government policy did not work out well. Its experience with deporting the strike leaders from the Clyde worked out so disastrously that it never again attempted drastic measures wholesale. Deportation is something which is peculiarly offensive to the English worker. It smacks of South Africa; it goes against his ingrained ideas as to his rights in his own home, and in his own home town. And while the labor movement in England might have been of two minds as to the issues of the Clyde strike and the notions of its leaders, it was not of two minds as to the treatment of the Clyde strikers. McManus was deported from Glasgow to another city which had been a center of labor conservatism, with the result that that city thereafter became a hotbed of agitation. Kirkwood states that the A. S. E. Court of Appeal asked him to become its chairman.

The government took the position in the case of a strike that it would not treat with the workers unless they went back. But a labor leader stated to us that, as a matter of fact, the government had crumpled in, time and again, and beat the devil around the stump in some other way; for example, by granting the demand, or some measure of it, without treating with the workers. This seemed so sweeping a statement that we took it up with a govern-



ment official who frankly admitted its truth. The results went to show pretty conclusively that the way to prevent strikes is not to prohibit them.

#### WHAT THE STEWARDS STAND FOR

But, as brought out on the Clyde, the shop stewards stand for something more far-reaching and constructive in its implications than the right to strike. They were asserting the right to an increased share in workshop management. They were doing it without consultation with the old-line officials of the unions ("We do not recognize them," said Kirkwood), and they were acting through an organization of shop stewards, representing unofficially all the shops in the district.

The position of the shop steward is a detail in trade union organization. The impulse of which the shop steward is an expression is from the rank and file of the labor movement. He came at a moment of arrest, when the trade union officials had been blocked by war legislation. He gathered up the dynamic of the rank and file and went ahead, while the officials had to mark time. He captured the imagination of the unrepresented workers by direct action just when compromise and postponement were being forced upon them by their former leaders. The shop stewards as a group are young men, the central officials are middle-aged. The shop stewards are not inured by a lifetime of troubled experience to piece-meal gains, to opportunism. In the hour when government officials were devising programs of workshop committees and joint councils, the shop stewards formed their own committees—living embodiments of the Whitley Report.

The danger of unchartered liberty and youthful dynamic is clear. Yet a keen observer of labor conditions expressed the belief to us that there would not be permanent antagonism between the self-created shop stewards and the shop committees set up under this national program. The stewards have need for the committees in carrying out their work. And it is in committee organization that the permanent basis of factory control can be found in a democratic way. Nor will there be permanent antagonism between the shop stewards and the national unions of organized labor. They are more likely to be recognized and harnessed to the main labor machine; their powers definitely limited so as to make concurrent national action possible, and at the same time to give considerable latitude in local matters.

From the union standpoint, the immediate question is: Shall shop stewards of various trades receive recognition for common action in the works of a district? G. D. H. Cole has suggested a way out.



Let the general principle of organization be that of the works branch (instead of the residence branch). Then the shop stewards will become the branch officials, and the shop stewards' committee the branch committee. The unofficial workshop movement will have been taken up into, and made a part of, the official machinery of Trade Unionism.

At a national conference held between the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Engineering Trade Unions, recognition was given to shop stewards, and their entry into negotiation in the early phases permitted. The A. S. E. did not sign the agreement. In December, 1917, representatives of the Engineering Employers' Federation and of 13 trade unions held a conference. The unions included Steam Engine Workers, Toolmakers, Smiths and Strikers, Brassfounders and Metal Mechanics, Blacksmiths and Iron Workers, Electricians, Journeymen Brassfounders, Coremakers, and Enginemen; the Workers Union and General Workers. They came to agreement that the functions of the stewards, so far as they were concerned with the avoidance of disputes, would be on the following lines:

A workman or workmen desiring to raise any question in which he or they are directly concerned shall in the first instance discuss the same with his or their foreman.

Failing settlement the question shall, if desired, be taken up with the management by the appropriate shop stewards and one of the workmen directly concerned.

If no settlement is arrived at the question may, at the request of either party, be further considered at a meeting to be arranged between the management and the appropriate shop steward, together with a deputation of the workmen directly concerned. At this meeting the organizing district delegate may be present, in which event a representative of the employers' association shall also be present.

The question may thereafter be referred for further consideration in terms of the provisions for avoiding disputes.

No stoppage of work shall take place until the question has been fully dealt with in accordance with this agreement and with the provisions for avoiding disputes.

Meanwhile, the shop stewards' movement was spreading out into woodworking trades, textiles, and the boot and shoe trades.<sup>1</sup> A

<sup>1</sup> The manufacturing sections of the cotton industry are now beginning to follow the spinners in the creation of shop committees. The Ashton and District Textile Manufacturing Trades Federation has elaborated a scheme for the appointment of shop stewards and shop committees. A steward is to be appointed for every fifteen or twenty workers, and the expenses are to be met by a shop levy of 1d. monthly. The stewards are

prophet and philosopher of its extension (himself one of the leaders) is J. T. Murphy of Sheffield, whose pamphlet has been accepted by the National Conference of Shop Stewards as voicing their demands. He calls it "The Workers' Committee" and he believes that the new trade union organization will be based on the shop and the works, instead of the craft and the industry. He gives the power of final decisions always to the rank and file, and never to the upper stories of organization. He visions shop stewards, shop committees, plant committees, local industrial committees, local workers' committees (all the plants in a district) and then a national organization of districts.

Murphy holds that "the conflict between the rank and file of the trade unions and their officials, if not remedied, will lead us all into muddle and ultimately disaster." He believes that "government by trade union officials" has become discredited, not because of "the difference between propaganda and administration," but because of the remoteness of union officials from the workshop:

The procedure to adopt is to form in every workshop a workshop committee, composed of shop stewards, elected by the workers in the workshops. Skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers should have their shop stewards, and due regard be given also to the particular union to which each worker belongs. We would also advise that there be one shop steward to not more than 15 workers. Another step is to intensify the development of the workshop committees by the formation in every plant of a plant or works committee. To achieve this all the stewards of each firm, from every department of that firm, should meet and elect a committee from amongst them to centralize the efforts or link up the shop committees in the firm.

Murphy sees through this machinery the modification of the old trade union organizations, "until we merge into the great industrial union of the working class."

to elect from themselves shop committees, and grievances are to be submitted to these committees, which will take them up with the management. Failing a settlement at this stage, the matter will be carried to the district trade union organization. Thus the movement towards workshop organization goes on spreading from one section of workers to another.

The Oldham operative cotton spinners have approved the adoption of the shop steward principle in the cotton mills by a majority of nearly two to one. It is provided under the scheme that there shall be a shop club at each mill, that all spinners at the mills must be members, and that the chairman, secretary, and committee of the respective shop clubs shall be representatives to the management in case of any grievance. Each shop club is to appoint two representatives to attend the district monthly meetings and report on the proceedings to their club.

But one thing is sure. While, as we shall see in succeeding chapters, the government plans Whitley Committees (with the consent of the employer and the worker), and while farseeing employers encourage them, elsewhere the workers themselves elect their own stewards, their own committees, and set going from the bottom up the movement toward workers' control, which in its various embodiments will dominate industrial reconstruction in England.

The shop stewards are those who have broken with tradition at the place where the fight is hardest—in their own organization, in their own workshop.

## CHAPTER XV

### INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

THE miner working with the naked material itself, tearing it from its elemental setting, and lifting it to its market, has a clearer vision of industry than the mechanic who deals with the tenth part of a process on a machine. Wherefore the British miners have, of all trade unionists, stood most unbudgingly for self-government in their calling as a whole. It was the miners who refused to come in under the Treasury Agreement. They did not give up their right to strike. As a result, their leaders, like Robert Smillie and Vernon Hartshorn, who defied the government, have held the trust of the rank and file.

Out of 1,095,000 British coal miners, 800,000 are organized in the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, of which Robert Smillie is head. In 1915, he became chairman, also, of the new Triple Alliance, composed of the Miners, the National Transport Workers' Federation, and the National Union of Railwaymen. The Triple Alliance with its million and a half men, is the strongest offensive amalgamation that has ever been made in the trade union world. Controlling fuel and the machinery of transport, it can hold up the economic life of Great Britain. Of the miners alone, and their head, Clynes once said that they unmake cabinets, and another trade unionist felt their power so keenly that he reminded them that they were not God Almighty.

The archetype of the new race of rulers is not the clever, honest statesman, J. R. Clynes, nor the political engineer, Arthur Henderson. It is not symbolized by the pure burning heart of the labor movement, George Lansbury, nor by the accurate, patient, astute, fact-gathering, program-formulating intellect, like Sidney Webb and G. D. H. Cole. To the ignorant outsider, and to several millions of the workers of Britain, who know their man, the representative of labor at this time, catching up its master ideas, touched with its fervor, and conscious of its delegated power, is Robert Smillie.

Smillie comes from the same district which gave Keir Hardy and Alexander MacDonald (the great miners' leader and one of the first labor members of Parliament) to the English labor movement.

While, earlier in the war, his views on war policy and peace were outspokenly at variance with the general trend of sentiment within the ranks of organized labor, so secure was his standing among the men for trusted leadership and ability that he was kept at his post. The government itself appointed him to membership on the Whitley Committee whose report forms the basis of British policy for industrial reconstruction after the war. More than once during the war he was asked to enter the British ministry.

Robert Smillie has seven grown sons—all Socialists like their father. Two of them came to him when the war broke out and said, "We know how you stand. We believe as you do. But if there is to be killing and sweating we will take our share of it." And they volunteered. Two other sons came to him; they were conscientious objectors, and were later accepted as such by the tribunals, being allowed to work in callings of national importance: one on a farm and one in timber cutting. Three other sons were at work in the mines and steel mills. One of the first named is an officer who put his training in the pits to account in helping carry out the largest military mining operation on the western front. He was later invalided back to England with neurasthenia as a result of nine days in which he was cooped in a dug-out in the midst of artillery fire.

Smillie himself is a Scotchman in the burr of his tongue and a miner in the set of his shoulders. He is powerful because of his position, and he is powerful in his personality. In his rough tweeds, pipe in mouth, in a room so cold that he paced back and forth to keep warm, he made the following statement to us at Nottingham of how things stood with the men of the mining industry:

Our experience in this country was that when war was declared it undoubtedly created an enormous amount of enthusiasm. Men of all ranks rushed to join the army, for what to them seemed the holiest cause that could be—the defense of small nations and treaties. Fathers and sons went together to recruiting offices, and fathers made misstatements about their ages in order to be accepted as recruits.

Moreover, there seemed to be a special desire to have miners on the part of the military authorities, who stated on many occasions that miners made the best class of soldiers. They had been used to facing dangers all their lives in mine work. The nature of the employment had developed them and made them strong. They did not require so much training as people who joined from sedentary employments. Within the first eighteen months about a quarter of a million miners joined the colors—or, roughly, 25 per cent of the mine workers.

We found so many miners leaving the mines, there was serious



danger that a falling output of coal would interfere with the engineering and munitions works. A very large number of elderly men who had previously been miners came back to the pits, and a large number of outside laborers came in. In addition, some thousands of miners who either broke down in training or were wounded were sent back. The military authorities did not, however, return any Class A men, and the districts managed to keep up output with the additional labor mentioned.

It was evidently the intention of the military authorities and employers that soldiers coming back into the mines and into munition work should be under military discipline and should wear the uniform and work at soldiers' pay. The miners in conference decided that they would insist that these men should have full civilian rights, that they should have to be members of the trade union, and that they should not be used as strike breakers. The government agreed to this line, and the soldiers returned to the mines are in the same position as other workers.

All members of the miners' unions who have gone to the front have been kept in full membership without payment while there, and will be accepted back in good standing on their return. All those who have come into the mines from the outside have, of course, linked up with the unions. [The present situation is that in probably 95 per cent of the coal mines of Great Britain all persons connected with mining labor must be members of the organization.] In the majority of the branches of the miners' federation the payment of sixpence per year to the union secures funeral benefits to the miner, his wife and children. Because of the number of miners who joined the army, the deaths at the front have been exceptionally heavy, and death claims have been paid out in all cases. This has been a serious drain on the unions, but as there have been no serious or widespread strikes, they are financially stronger than they were prior to the war. Including those at the front, they number 800,000 miners—60,000 or 70,000 higher than before the war. But no less than three hundred thousand have joined the forces.<sup>1</sup> Since the falling off of the export coal trade the output of the mines is, of course, considerably under that of normal times, not because the individual miner has turned out less, but because there are less men engaged.

Previous to the war, miners usually sent one or two of their sons to learn a trade outside the industry; since the war, all boys of a miner's family, generally speaking, have gone to the pits or are working on the surface. In Scotland the boys go right to the coal base as drivers; in other parts they go as trapper boys or pony drivers. At all conferences the miners are in favor of raising the minimum age to fifteen and sixteen, but during the war this has not been possible.

There are no women underground in any part of Great Britain,

<sup>1</sup> The number at the close of the war was 400,000.

as was the case in the middle of the last century; but on the surface, in Lancashire and Scotland, women have been employed to take the places of men and boys in clearing and manipulating coal on the surface. We insist that these women or young girls receive the same wages paid to the men or boys whose work they are doing, and in our last claim for an increase in wages the women got the full increase of nine shillings per week, secured by the men. In nearly all the mining districts outside of Lancashire and Scotland the mine workers object strongly to their women being employed about the mines. If it had not been for the war, the probability is that a strong movement would have been set afoot to have female labor abolished even in Lancashire and Scotland. The question of the women being competitors of the men has not entered in. By insisting on the same wages for the same work we eliminate that. The miners do not think it is suitable work for the future mothers of the race. It is in many cases dirty and hard work. The women who have come into mining work since the war broke out will, in all probability, leave it—after things have settled down. Under reconstruction, if it is seriously gone into in the nation's interest, many channels of employment will open up, and make the pressure on them to earn in this way less severe.

Probably the most important factor in industrial relations in the war was the attempt of the government to put miners under the munitions act. This would have taken from them the right to strike, and would have placed their leaders under a clause which imposed a heavy fine or imprisonment on any leader who had part in one. Mr. Lloyd George was minister of munitions when that bill went through. Accordingly, we saw him on behalf of the miners and told him that under no circumstances would the miners allow themselves to be placed under the munitions act. He ultimately agreed. That very fact has done more to keep some little shred of freedom for the workers of Great Britain than any other thing that has happened. All the strikes that have taken place in shipyards, engineering and munition centers have been illegal strikes. They have been unconstitutional, as the officials of the unions dare not consent to them. No trade union funds have been paid out to the strikers. Yet the government could not act as strongly as it pleased against men who came out on strike because of the fact that the great mining movement was still free to take industrial action at any time. The government could not act drastically elsewhere, when the trade unionists generally knew the miners had held out and were free; while their own leaders had permitted them to be put under the act.

One of the local branches of the miners' organization in Scotland passed a resolution that if other trade unionists were badly treated they would stop out of sympathy. But the necessity has never arisen.

In South Wales a dispute broke out immediately after the munitions act was passed—the most important area in Great Britain

from the point of view that it supplies admiralty coal for Britain, France and Italy.

The government got the king to "proclaim" the South Wales miners, which was equal to placing them under the munitions act for the time being. The government then endeavored to get them to return to work. But the very fact that the line had been taken of proclaiming their strike as illegal stiffened them; and the government ultimately had to take over control of the Welsh mines and to force the employers to concede the points for which the workers were contending—a substantial increase in wages to help meet the increase in the cost of living.

Since then the government has taken over control of all the mines of Great Britain, metal, as well as coal; lime and other quarries; also brick ovens and coke-producing plants.

In August, 1917, the Miners' Federation, which includes the men of all of the coal mining districts of England, Scotland and Wales, made a demand for a general increase in wages, to help meet the increase in the cost of living. They made this demand not to the mine owners, but directly to the government through the coal controllers and threatened a common strike unless a substantial advance was conceded. In September last an increase of one and sixpence per day was granted to all men and women working in and about the mines who were over sixteen years old, and ninepence per day to all minors under sixteen.

#### THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

To turn to the other members of the Triple Alliance. The railway service is well organized. The National Union of Railwaymen has 401,000 members. Its secretary is J. H. Thomas, M. P. He is one of the half-dozen strongest labor leaders in Great Britain. He has canny common sense, limpid sincerity, and a powerful voice out of a small body to make known his views.

The other considerable unions in the railway service are the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (38,000), and the Railway Clerks' Association (60,000). Altogether there are 610,000 railway employees.

The class consciousness of railwaymen was heightened by the fact that the Taff Vale case of 1902 and the Osborne judgment of 1909 fell within their organization. The Taff Vale Railway Company won its case against the railway union for damages because of breach of contract from a strike. If this had become precedent, trade union action industrially would have been crippled. The Osborne case was one in which a railwayman claimed an injunction against using trade union funds for political purposes. If this had stood, trade union action politically would have been stalled. [See Chapter XII.]

Out of these and other experiences, the railwaymen learned their common interest, and built a constitution which gives them true industrial unionism in which all grades of labor are represented (instead of being split up and walled off by a multitude of craft unions). A national conference in 1917 of the district councils of the railwaymen, called for state ownership of the railways after the war "to be jointly controlled and managed by the state and representatives of the National Union of Railwaymen."

Under the occupational group of transport come the National Sailors and Firemen's Union (70,000), National Union of Ships' Stewards, Cooks, Butchers and Bakers (20,000); the Waterside workers with their National Union of Dock Labourers (50,000), Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union (65,000); the vehicle workers with their vehicle, tramway, motormen, lorrymen, and carters associations. The National Transport Workers' Federation has over 300,000 members.

The Triple Alliance grew naturally out of a need. A coal strike hits railwaymen. A railway strike hits miners and dockers. A dock strike ties up coal brought by railways to the waterfront. Strikes in 1911 and 1912 on railways, docks and mines had partly failed, so the executives of the Miners, the National Union of Railwaymen and the National Transport Workers' Federation held conferences in 1914, and a scheme of joint action was ratified on December 9, 1915, for "matters of a national character."

When a delegation from the Triple Alliance visited the Premier, the London *Times* said:

The delegates are waiting on the Prime Minister to issue their orders. This body of trade unionists is formally attempting to supercede constitutional government and to frighten the appointed Ministers of the Crown into doing their will.

There is no question that Robert Smillie, Vernon Hartshorn, J. H. Thomas, Robert Williams, and the other members of the three executive committees of the Triple Alliance see the vast implications of their coalition. Such power has passed into their hands as no human beings outside a war cabinet have exercised in modern days. They will mould the British labor movement of the future, and the structure of the state may be modified by their action.

#### THE ECONOMIC WEAPON

In June, 1918, the writer sat at luncheon with one of the executive committee of the Miners' Federation. He told how German guns now commanded French mines so that where 900,000 tons of



coal a month had hitherto been mined, now 100,000 tons were being mined, leaving a shortage of 800,000 tons. This shortage had to be met by the British miners, in large part by the Welsh miners. They were aware that by stopping work they could end the war in nine days, because this coal was essential for the transport of troops. But the power this gave them, they did not see how to use at the moment for a democratic gain. If they quit work, their own troops would be let down, and the Germans would come through. They held to their job.

This illustrates the latent power of unionism in the economic field. In the days of reconstruction, organized labor will be the driving force behind any drastic change in the new social order. When Smillie swings the Triple Alliance, he will smite with its three-fold weight. As Smillie has said:

The Triple Alliance has, for the period of the war, acted only on the defensive, but there will come a time when we shall formulate proposals of aggressive action. The mere threat ought to be sufficient to bring about our well-thought-out democratic demands.

In writing of the British labor movement, it is worth while to define it precisely. We have defined it on its political side. With its outstanding economic formation before us—the Triple Alliance, we shall now define it on its industrial side. Because of the courtesy of G. D. H. Cole, we had access to the figures for 1918 he had patiently gathered for his then unpublished book, "An Introduction to Trade Unionism."

In 1892, in a population of 40 millions, the trade unions of the United Kingdom had a membership of about one million and a quarter (100,000 women). At the end of 1916, the membership was 4,399,696 (about 535,000 women). To-day in a population of 47 millions, the membership is 5,000,000, over forty-five per cent. of the male manual workers. This is a more advanced stage than in the United States, where the American Federation of Labor has something over three millions in a population of a hundred millions. In Great Britain, the basic industries are organized, and in several instances the organization is nearly proof against "black-legs." One-half of trade union membership is in the engineering and shipbuilding industries, textiles and coal-mining.

The engineering or metal trades we have studied in detail in the preceding chapter; the miners in this.

In the shipbuilding trades, the chief unions are the United Society of Boilermakers (80,000), and the Shipwrights Association (30,000).

The general labor unions have a membership of several hundred thousand (300,000 in the munition trades, alone). These include



the Workers' Union (350,000), National Union of General Workers (250,000), National Amalgamated Union of Labour (110,000). The national Federation of General Workers includes most of these in its membership of 700,000.

In building, the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, Cabinet-makers and Joiners have 100,000.

The textile trades include the Amalgamated Association of Card, Blowing and Ring-Room Operatives (60,000), the Amalgamated Association of Weavers, Winders, Warpers (200,000), the Amalgamated Association of Operative Cotton Spinners (50,000).

In post-bellum days, there will be some friction inside the union movement along sex lines, although the woman's union movement stands for equal pay for equal work. Other conflicts growing out of the war will be between the skilled men and the unskilled who have been brought in and over questions of jurisdiction. Organized labor in the economic field is itself in for a period of reconstruction. Here again, the more fluid political movement adjusted itself to changed conditions while the war was on.

For, as already noted, trade unionism is in the melting pot, and in every branch and local there is discussion of how to reorganize in the economic field to meet the changed situation. There is a general feeling for more effective organization, and it would not be surprising if one-half to two-thirds of the criss-cross of organizations should be junked in time. A lot of personal considerations enter into the inhibitions which now prevent it. Some of the leaders would lose their jobs if there were a general telescoping; there are questions as to which of two executives would be the top man. But these considerations are likely all to be swept aside when the workers see the way out and the movement toward consolidation gets under way.

There are already beginnings. Not only have the miners, transport workers, and railway men already created the Triple Alliance, but there is talk of merging them into one great union, with three branches. This would make them even more than they are now the dominant organization. Even as it is, at the conventions the votes swung by the big organizations often decide issues, and in self-protection other combinations will be created to restore the equilibrium.

The tendency is toward industrial organization in the big coherent industrial fields—if by that is meant the organization in one union of all men employed about, for example, the mines. Its operation among railroaders in the last ten years has brought most of the men employed in and around railroading into one unit. In the iron and steel trade, the various skilled crafts are already united,

but as yet have not broadened into taking in the unskilled or semi-skilled men as in the case of the railroads and mines. On the other hand, in trades where you do not have a few great employers, or the employers are not organized, the solution is not so simple. Here the old craft unions may persist in a modified form, after various consolidations.

Slowly, the many unions (over 1100) are coming into effective industrial combination. The labor movement is not weakening toward a split. It is amalgamating. In 22 organizations are found three-quarters of all trade union membership. The cohesive force of the trade union movement is clearly revealed in these terms, that there are eight effective industrial combinations, each with at least 100,000 members, and a total membership of two and a half million.

The eight combinations are the Miners (800,000), the Railway-men (400,000), the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (270,000), Workers' Union (350,000), National Union of General Workers (250,000), Amalgamated Weavers' Association (200,000), Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, Cabinet-makers and Joiners (110,000), and National Amalgamated Union of Labour (117,000).

This is the striking blow behind the bargaining power of the industrial movement. And not only that, but when coal, cotton, transport and metal workers decide on a program of action, Great Britain will listen. And more simply yet, if the Triple Alliance wills it, the industrial life in Britain will stop short.

Of the reconstruction period, Smillie said to us:

The miners are practically unanimously in favor of state ownership of the land and of replacing the people as food producers on land which is now unused. They are certainly determined that as far as in them lies the government shall not only continue in control of the mines, but extend that control to state ownership. The syndicalist idea of miners' working, managing and owning the mines has not a very deep hold on the miners of this country. They fully expect, if the mines are owned and controlled by the state, that the workmen will have a considerable voice in the management, in view of the fact that they have more than livelihood at stake. Their safety of life and limb justifies the claim that they shall be represented in the management. We feel that many accidents of a more or less dangerous character arise not from the carelessness of the present management so much as through the desire to secure the largest possible output at the smallest possible cost.

I have probably a more unique opportunity for testing the views of the organized workers of the country than most people because I have spent the last three years in addressing mass meetings in every corner of England, Scotland and Wales. The majority of

those meetings have been called under trade union auspices, and the chief matters dealt with have been the preservation by organized labor of the liberties which it has taken so many years to secure, and the furtherance of a greater after-the-war reconstruction movement, by which the land of Great Britain will be taken over from its present holders and used in the interests of the people; and mines, railways and workshops will be used for the production of commodities for use, and not merely to build up fortunes for the capitalist class.

To sum up:—Nearly half of the male adult wage-earning population is organized into trade unions. Unskilled or general workers have come inside trade union organization during the last four years at an unprecedented rate. Thus the National Union of General Workers increased its membership by over 100,000 in 1917. The old threat of unorganized, casual, unskilled, overworked, underpaid workers destroying the structure of trade unionism has disappeared. Their incorporation, however, is effecting profound changes in that structure. In spite of many craft unions, great groups have formed, and the unions have learned their power in the state.

They compose a Trades Union Congress, with a membership of over four million. Their political expression is the British Labour Party, with a trade union membership of 2,415,383. Seven hundred and fifty thousand workers are organized in the General Federation of Trade Unions for strike insurance benefits and other purposes. Three great groups have formed the Triple Industrial Alliance. These organizations represent the long struggle of the workers for recognition. They have won power, and they begin to wield it. The coming years will witness their use of it in achieving self-government in industry and in reconstructing the economic order.

We have tried to give a fair and unbiased interpretation of the facts such as we have found them, not an expression of our own views on economic or political theory. Much of the discussion of the rise of labor, both in Great Britain and in the United States, is unintelligent because it assumes that we still have to deal with socialism as embodied in academic programs or with debatable questions of labor organization. Some people may be startled when they realize the degree of power and of class-conscious organization already reached by British labor in the economic field. But it is only by such realization that statesmen, industrial managers and labor leaders alike will be able to deal with the forces at work in the economic order intelligently and constructively. A mere opposition is as useless as drifting, and will have no other effect than that of aggravating the clash of interests and philosophies which is bound to come to a decision before long.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SELF-GOVERNMENT IN INDUSTRY

THE application of the principle of workers' control (self-government in industry) is the greatest functional advance for democracy since the state extended its operation beyond police power and became an administrator of public services.

It is this application of the principle of democratic control to the work-a-day life which the Bolsheviks have aimed at. But the application of the principle is determined by the degree and smoothness of industrial organization. Isolated workmen cannot purchase raw material, control the flow of credit, and market the product. Workers' control demands a long discipline, an adaptation to the conditions of the industry, a developed capacity.

What the sweated trades need first is not workers' control, but a minimum wage. Workers' control is an elastic term. It means, first, a little control in the workshop in regard to welfare and general workshop conditions. Then more control in relation to discipline and sanitation. And so on, up to full participation in control over the industrial process inside the shop and in the industry as a whole. The degree of control will be set by the capacity of the workers for exercising control.

The movement toward self-government in industry in Great Britain has expressed itself in three ways:

(1) The instinctive action of the workers themselves (checkweighman in the mines, clicker in the printers' chapel, shop stewards in the metal trades);

(2) The action of far-sighted employers by enlightened self-abdication of autocratic control over certain functions (the Renold committees at Manchester, the experiments by Rowntree and other employers);

(3) Government action for the purpose of giving effect to the reports of the Whitley Committee.

We have shown the shop stewards in action. We have shown why they acted, and why they had power to act. Of their action, Dr. Addison, as head of the Ministry of Munitions, said:

The present unrest has largely been engineered by a number of men who have set up organizations known as *shop stewards' com-*



*mittees*, and these committees appear to have serious differences with the Central Trade Union executives. The Minister of Munitions has no knowledge of these differences. Several of the telegrams received have displayed just as great an anxiety to upset the authority of the Central Trade Union executives as anything else. It is quite impossible for the Ministry to negotiate on labor matters with any other authorities than the responsible executives of the unions. More than 80,000 shops in 20,000 establishments in the country are concerned, and it would be quite impossible for us to come to an understanding with each collection of shop stewards. We must deal with the organization which represents a trade collectively.

The problem, then, was to fit shop stewards into trade union organization, to relate a fresh impulse to an institution. The instinctive action of the shop stewards brought them into conflict with their own officials, the employers and the government.

But the shop stewards are not the only group that has felt its way toward self-government. Inside the same engineering trade, from which the shop stewards sprang, there is developing a more orderly movement toward self-government. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers drew up a careful outline of workers' control for shop committees, central works council, local joint committees, central conciliation board. Two of the men, instrumental in devising this outline, were F. S. Button (then on the Executive Council of the A. S. E., later a member of the Government's Committee on Production) and G. D. H. Cole (the expert in trade union organization). The demarcation of function in this hierarchy of committees is carefully given in detail. The reader will find the full outline in Appendix XIV. The point is that a great trade union is creating its own constitution for self-government in industry.

The Executive Committee of the National Union of Railwaymen likewise has formulated its detailed demand for workers' control (Appendix XIV).

The building trades early asked for a builders' national industrial parliament, with a constitution calling for works committees, joint district boards, and a national parliament.

The basic principle of workers' control is that of function, "no function, no rights," the fulfillment of function giving the right of control—control of conditions and processes.

Each of these programs of the workers, demanding control, specifies such matters as shop rules, welfare, rest periods, working shifts, adjustment in existing piece work prices, the class of labor to be used on new types of machinery.

Scientific management will be closely scrutinized by these work-



ers' committees. Health and the integrity of personality, as well as the standard of living, will be safeguarded if they have their way before speeding-up devices, motion studies and standardized equipment are permitted to level industry to a mechanical monotony. Scientific management, bringing greater productivity, must come, because "the real available net income would not, distributed evenly among the population of the United Kingdom, yield more than £34 per person, or £136 for an average family of four. The amount of national productivity was not adequate to supply the full requirements of a progressive people." But scientific management will come only as the employer pays the price of admission, and that price is a measure of workers' control.

For years joint committees have existed in the leading trades. These have been conciliation boards, with arbitral elements, and recourse to some third impartial authority. The area of their functioning was limited to not much else than the historic twins of wages and hours. The new ideas of control call for a negotiation board, on which the two parties meet on all questions arising between employers and employee, especially in the new storm centers of discipline and management.

Let us restate the significance of this change. Industrial action centers in control over the processes of production. Political action in the economic field centers in control of exchange, taxation, banking and investment. In industrial action the British workers have won the right of collective bargaining. Collective bargaining has concerned itself mainly with wages and hours. By possessing the right of collective bargaining, British workers have organized over 45 per cent. of the male adult wage-earning population.

Now the British worker is busy in winning a new right; affirming a new concern. It is that of producers' control in the shop, plant and national industry. It is that of self-government in industry. The difference between collective bargaining and workers' control is at that invisible line where wages and hours pass over into status. It is where labor ceases to be bought as a commodity. It is where a shared management takes the place of autocratic orders and leads on to producers' control.

This idea of self-government in industry strikes out a philosophy of its own. The National Guild is a thing dreamed of, but never yet attained. It is like socialism and Christianity and brotherhood. The National Guild is an extension of the trade union till its structure covers an industry, embracing both managers and workers. It presupposes a Collectivist State. In popular phrase, its program is ownership by the state, and management by the workers. It represents the reaction not only against untrammelled private manipu-

lation of labor but against that form of state socialism which builds up a bureaucracy—a set of officials, sitting at the levers of power, and invading private life. Its direct conscious followers are not many. Its indirect influence is wide. Its organ, *The New Age*, has a limited but choice circulation. Its advocates, Orage, Mellor, Cole, and S. G. Hobson, are clear-thinking men whose ideas will continue to infiltrate the industrial population.

#### THE RENOLD PLAN

In this book we are not weighing industrial philosophies. We are interpreting such reconstruction plans as are already in operation, or are in process of enactment because an effective organization is the driving force behind them. In the movement toward self-government in industry, certain employers have been among the wise leaders. One of these is C. G. Renold, a north of England metal trades employer, who has carried out his ideas at his Manchester works. Renold represents the new type of employer who understands the democratic movement in industry. He says:

The Shop Stewards' Committee, in the engineering trade, at least, is fairly certain to constitute itself without any help from the management. The management should hasten to recognize it, and give it every facility for carrying on its business, and should endeavor to give it a recognized status and to impress it with a sense of responsibility.

He states that he comes to the subject of industrial unrest "with the conviction that the worker's desire for more scope in his working life can best be satisfied by giving him some share in the directing of it; if not of the work itself, at least of the conditions under which it is carried out."

Renold stresses the need for "a new orientation of ideas with regard to industrial management. The trend of such ideas must be in the direction of a devolution of some of the functions and responsibilities of management on to the workers themselves."

He begins with the conviction of this need. He assumes it without argument as a proved case. What concerns him is the machinery for the new social order already thrusting up through the welter of war. Such utter relegation to the scrap heap of an old order with its obsolete autocratic methods may shock some Americans. But the average British employer is a more enlightened person than the average American employer, because he has been chastened by a powerful and ever-growing trade union movement, which has long won the right of collective bargaining and of participation in the

determination of legal minimum wage standards. So when a proletarian philosophy of functional rights (the right of the producer to control the conditions and the processes of his production) is discharged at the British employer, he does not fight it blindly. He listens, and sometimes he accepts important elements and applies them to his organization. Detailed instances of this application by enlightened employers will be found in the Appendix.

Renold takes high ground in outlining his shop organization. He says:

The satisfaction to be derived from work depends upon its being a means of self-expression. This depends on the power of control exercised by the individual over the materials and processes used, and the conditions under which the work is carried out.

He recognizes the possibility of "the greater cumbersomeness of democratic proceedings" in mechanical efficiency, but puts his money on "freedom, initiative, interest, willing work and coöperation."

The questions of importance for joint consultation are wage and piece-rate question, and, to a lesser degree, "workshop practices and customs." Also, "safety and hygiene, shop amenities."

Or, in his systematic grouping, the questions in connection with which shop organizations would primarily benefit the workers are:

*Collective bargaining*, which includes wages; piece-work rates; the application of special legislation, awards, agreements; total hours of work; new processes or change of process; grades of work, due to the introduction of new types of machines.

*Grievances*, which include petty tyrannies by foremen, too rigid rules, wrongful dismissal.

*General shop conditions and amenities*, which include shop rules on smoking, tidiness; maintenance of discipline, time-keeping enforcement, meal hours, arrangements of shifts; accidents and sickness, safety appliances, rest room arrangements, medical advice; dining service; shop comfort and hygiene, temperature, ventilation, seats, drinking water; benevolent work, shop collections for charities, sick club, saving societies.

*General social amenities*, which include works picnics, games, musical societies.

Then come those matters on which joint discussion would primarily be of advantage to the management. These are interpretation of the management to the workers, education in shop processes and trade technique, promotion, education in general business questions.

What are the requirements which the new democratic machinery must satisfy?

No works committee can be a substitute for the trade union, and no attempt must be made by the employer to use it in this way. It will be necessary for the trade unionists to develop some means of working committees into their scheme of organization, otherwise there will be the danger of a works committee, able to act more quickly through being on the spot, usurping the place of the local district committee of the trade unions.

Exactly the thing that took place with the Clyde Shop Stewards, as we have seen in a preceding chapter.

The committee must represent all grades of workers. It must be in touch with the management as an integral functioning part of the organization, not as a mere grievance committee. It must possess rapidity of action.

The committees must represent skilled and unskilled, various unions, women. "It will probably be necessary to have at least two kinds of works committees: one representing trade unionists as such, the other representing simply works departments."

Finally, the success of works committees will depend on the success of the management. "The better organized and more constitutional the management is, the more possible is it for policy to be discussed with the workers." In other words, the "bad" employer in sweated unorganized trades with a huge labor turn-over will not offer much point of junction for workers' committees. We shall see later in this chapter how the government purposes (through the Whitley recommendations and trade boards) to legislate him into "goodness."

We have already quoted Renold on shop stewards. He accepts them. "It is doubtful, however, whether a shop stewards' committee can, or should, cover the full range of workers' activities, except in the very simplest type of works." His reasons are that the shop stewards will deal primarily with wages and piece-work questions on the basis of bargaining and as trade unionists, disregarding more general matters of workshop amenities, and that the shop stewards represent not the whole of the workers, but only the better organized sections.

Renold finally works out in exact detail the three kinds of committees, which he finds necessary to cover all the functions—the shop stewards committee, the welfare committee, and the social union. His analysis of their separate functions will be found in Appendix XII.

We have presented C. G. Renold's views and the details of his



organization, because the actions of an employer who understands industrial democracy and applies it are of more value than the reports of writers and closet theorists (from whom have come many programs of reconstruction).

#### OTHER EMPLOYERS

The Burnage Works of Renold described above have 17 departments, with 1000 male workers and 1600 women.

The Rolls-Royce works in engineering and motor cars have 6000 employees in 80 departments, of which nearly 40 have shop stewards. The works committee is one of shop stewards, each department electing its own shop steward (over half of the shop stewards belong to the A. S. E.). The management discusses with the committee changes of process, the base times for premium bonus work, dilution. The shop steward system here, with its representatives from the A. S. E., coppersmiths, pattern-makers and others, has fitted into the official higher trade union structure.

The Phoenix Dynamo Company, with 4,000 employees, has devised a system for fixing piece-work prices by continuous arbitration. The firm says, "There is no question so vital to engineering and kindred industries as that of the fixing of piece-work prices." The firm tabulates the main difficulties as unscientific price-fixing, and the absence of proper machinery for appeal. It has installed a time study office, where the worker can study the detail of the calculations. If the worker is unconvinced he has the right of appeal to a committee, consisting of three of the firm's representatives, and three workmen's representatives, who sit within two days of the complaint.

Messrs. Barr and Stroud, Engineering Works, 2,350 employees, have two workers' committees, one a committee dealing with shop amenities; the second, an industrial committee, based on trade unionism and the shop steward system. The twelve representatives of the workers are elected by the forty shop stewards of the plant. Questions treated by the industrial committee in the recent months have been the right of the convenor of shop stewards to go into other departments for discussion of grievances (one of the points at issue in the Clyde dispute, as we saw in Chapter XIV), wages of women, the record of changes in practice, the premium bonus system, appeals against dismissal, forgetfulness in "clocking on," Saturday overtime, wages of apprentices, rules for night shift work. Of this committee, the Ministry of Labour says:—"It is one of the most advanced works committees in existence."

The H. O. Strong and Sons Norfolk Engineering Works report:



"The management have found the committee of the greatest service in conducting the business of the works."

Such is the experience of a few out of many employers who have installed workers' committees.

The great Quaker cocoa firms, such as the Cadburys and the Rowntrees, have made pioneer applications of industrial democracy to their plants. We give the composition and the functions of the system of Rowntree & Co. of York in Appendix XIV and the high ground taken by a group of Quaker employers in Appendix XIII.

In a district investigation in the engineering and shipbuilding industries, ten employers expressed themselves in favor of works committees, and eight were opposed. Of the ten in favor, seven had a works committee. Of the eight opposed, one had a dilution committee, one a gunshop committee, and six had no form of committee. The reader who is interested should obtain a pamphlet from the British Ministry of Labour, entitled "Works Committees," where reports on 22 works committees in operation are given.

The new social order after the war begins with several hundred "converted" employers, because many of the 5,000 government-controlled factories were organized with works committees. This has been largely done by Martin Hall, of the Ministry of Munitions. The conception of these workshop councils held by Hall (as developed in an afternoon of talk with us) is more modest than that of David Kirkwood and J. T. Murphy. Hall's conception is that of a workers' grievance committee, a lightning rod for diverting and absorbing trouble. But the point is that the establishment of such committees (however restricted their scope in the beginning) is the affirmation of a new principle in industry. A principle once applied does not rest at its first frontiers. It extends itself out over new areas, and each gain is the entrenchment for a fresh push.

#### THE WHITLEY REPORTS

The Whitley Reports and memorandum of the Ministry of Reconstruction are given in Appendices VII, VIII, IX and X. They call for joint industrial councils representing management and workers, in ever-widening spheres of coöperation, local, district, national. That is, in the shop and factory, the industrial area, and the trade, the worker is to have a share in the management of industry. The Whitley Reports were issued by a subcommittee of the Reconstruction Committee, which later became the Committee on Relations Between Employers and Employed, to the Ministry of Reconstruction. This Whitley Committee (as it came to be known because of its Chairman, J. H. Whitley) was composed of such persons as

F. S. Button (formerly an executive of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers), J. R. Clynes (later Food Controller), J. A. Hobson (the economist), J. J. Mallon (secretary of the Anti-Sweating League), Sir G. J. Carter, chairman of the Shipbuilding Employers' Federation, Sir Gilbert Claughton, chairman of the London and North Western Railway Company, Sir Thomas A. Ratcliffe-Ellis, secretary of the Mining Association. Its recommendations for the organized trades are voluntary. This means that the employers and the unions are not forced to inaugurate industrial councils.

The matters to be dealt with by these joint bodies of managers and workers are improvements of processes, machinery, organization, industrial experiments, the settlement of the general principles governing the conditions of employment, including the methods of fixing, paying and adjusting wages.

The Federation of British Industries accepted the recommendations of the Whitley Report. The Federation has 124 associations and 691 firms and individuals, representing 9,000 firms in all.

The British Trades Union Congress of 1917 with its millions of organized workers accepted the Whitley Report. The Congress of 1918 called on the Government to apply it to all departments of state service.

The original recommendations were clear enough for the organized trades. Later this recommendation was made for the sweated trades:

In industries having no adequate organization of employers or employed, we recommend that trade boards should be continued or established.

That means that a minimum wage shall be established in these trades by public authority pending trade union organization. Trade boards are joint statutory bodies representing not only employers and employees but the public, set up by the Minister of Labour, to fix such minimum wage rates, enforceable by law.

The Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress in affirming its general acceptance of the Whitley Reports makes certain reservations. Where well established means exist for negotiation between trade unions and employers' associations, the Parliamentary Committee (which is the executive of the congress) advises that no effort should be made by the government to interfere with existing arrangements. The committee suggests that, wherever alteration in trade rule or custom may be agreed to by mutual consent between employers' associations and trade unions, the less government interference, the better will be the result obtained.

As to works committees, the Parliamentary Committee urges that such committees shall not interfere with the general questions affecting the working rules of the trade respecting the hours of labor, rates of wages, overtime rates. "Such questions ought not to be dealt with by a process of shop bargaining as a substitute for the collective bargaining usually conducted by the responsible and experienced officials of the unions on behalf of all the workers employed either in a particular district or industry."

In short, the works committee must be a part of the machinery of the trade union. In a preceding chapter we saw the shop stewards committees fighting "the responsible and experienced officials of the unions." We saw that their new dynamic is likely to be harnessed to the trade union. We saw that this will remake the structure of the trade union. Clearly, the same process will go on in all trades where the works committees are set up. The works committees will be close to the rank and file, will be composed of them and elected by them. The "responsible and experienced officials of the unions" must recognize them, and create a functioning place for them in the organism of the trade unions.

As to industrial councils for industries *partially organized*, the Parliamentary Committee states that councils of this kind shall not be accepted as a permanent form of joint activity to act as substitutes for the representative bodies which ought to exist for each industry. Just as works committees in organized industries must not function outside the trade union, so industrial councils in partially-organized industries must not carry on joint negotiations as a final substitute for trade union organization and for the ultimate establishment of effective representative bodies of employers and of trade unions.

The principle in these provisos of the Parliamentary Committee is that "the extent of state assistance shall vary inversely with the degree of organization in industries." Government assistance is not an alternative to organic relations between employers and employed. It is a step in that direction. As the Government's Reconstruction Committee said:

An essential condition of securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed is that there should be adequate organization on the part of both employers and workpeople.

The proposals outlined for joint coöperation throughout the several industries depend for their ultimate success upon there being such organization on both sides, and such organization is necessary also to provide means whereby the arrangements and agreements made for the industry may be effectively carried out.

The trade unions accept this as a desirable policy, but want it to stop there. To quote the Parliamentary Committee's report:

With permanent and direct intervention of government officials on joint industrial councils appointed to deal with the detail relations of employers and employees we have no sympathy. State assistance may, however, take another form. The government may by a strict enforcement of the Fair Wages Clause improve the status of many industries.

In short, the government can bring sweated industries up to the level where they become organized industries. Then organized labor prefers to talk directly with the employers and rely on the developing machinery of the trade unions to safeguard themselves; the union and the employers' associations forming their own joint industrial councils.<sup>1</sup>

But was the government prepared to swallow its own medicine? Was it ready to install workers' control in the public services? Bonar Law said that it had been decided to adopt in principle the application of the Whitley Report to Government Departments, and an Inter-Departmental Committee, presided over by the Minister of Labour, had been appointed to consider what modifications were necessary. This applied to the Post Office, the Railways, and the dockyard employees.

The Ministry of Labour announced:

Committees mean discussion; discussion takes time; and from this point of view it is sometimes argued that a Works Committee may tend to slow down the pace of industry; and, again, that it may be difficult to convince a committee of the value or the feasibility of a new idea or process, so that the way of innovation may be somewhat impeded. These are theoretical objections. In practice Works Committees—the evidence would suggest—have improved time-keeping and increased output. . . . In practice, again, they have been the opposite of conservative, and instead of checking change they have themselves suggested change. . . . They make for better relations and greater harmony, and these are the things that matter most to industry. More time is gained by the absence of disputes than is lost by the presence of discussion.

<sup>1</sup> Self-government in industry clearly precludes autocratic interference or domination by the state; but between that and the complete exclusion of the public from industrial control is a wide gulf. The three-fold membership in the trade boards is not duplicated in the Whitley councils and, as we shall see, the relative competence of the two systems in safeguarding not only the workers but the community is under discussion. The propensity of the government to set up Whitley committees in weakly organized trades is criticized by J. J. Mallon, secretary of the Anti-Sweating League, as prejudicial to the unorganized workers. [See *The Toynbee Record*, November, 1918.]



B. Seeböhm Rowntree, a constructive leader of the new industrial statesmanship, said to us that the shop committee takes the time of twelve persons in deciding what one person used to decide, but that the fact that twelve persons decided it was a democratic gain. He was referring to his own shop committees.

The firm of Messrs. Reuben Gaunt & Sons, Spinners and Manufacturers, of Forsley, Yorkshire, report of their works committees:

Democratic control of industry can only come when democracy has knowledge and wisdom to assume control. Rightly used, conferences will provide the necessary experience and education for greater responsibility. The two principal factors in the organization of human beings are the spirit and the machinery. In successful coöperation the spirit is more potent than the machinery. Mental attitude is of greater consequence than mental capacity. Notwithstanding this, the machinery is usually the only factor which is accepted consciously and considered in a scientific way.

To speak precisely, the shop committee covers a particular department or shop in a works. The works committee covers the whole of a works, and may be industrial, welfare, or social. The district council bears much the same relation to a works committee, as a works committee does to the shop committee. The district council covers all works in an industrial area in a particular industry; and matters which it is unable to resolve are in turn carried up to the national councils.

By April, 1918, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour [Bridgeman] stated in the House of Commons that the Whitley Report had been circulated to the trade unions and employers' associations in all industries to which its recommendations were applicable. Negotiations were then taking place in 26 industries, covering 3,000,000 workpeople. In twelve of these industries, covering 2,000,000 workpeople, joint subcommittees were already engaged in drawing up schemes for industrial councils, and in five of these industries final agreement upon the actual constitution had been practically reached. In the case of one industry—pottery—a National Joint Industrial Council had been set up. [Appendix XI.]

The Whitley Committee, Bridgeman added, threw the responsibility for establishing these councils entirely on the existing organizations, and the government had neither the intention nor the wish to force the new organization on unwilling industries.

On July 5, 1918, Bridgeman made public this statement:—

Two joint industrial councils for the pottery and building industries, respectively, have already held their first meetings. Joint industrial councils have also been constituted for the heavy chem-

icals, gold, silver, and kindred trades, rubber and silk industries, and the first meetings of these councils will be held during July.

As a result of conferences, called as a rule by the Minister, considerable progress has been made in the following eight industries: Baking, cable-making, commercial road transport, electrical contracting, furniture manufacture, leather goods and belting, matches, and vehicle building. Provisional committees have been appointed and have drafted constitutions which have been sent out to the various associations concerned for their approval. A constitution for the printing industry has been drafted, but has not yet been sent out to the associations concerned for approval.

As soon as the constitutions have been approved by the various associations, the first meetings of the councils will be arranged.

In the case of the following five industries, conferences have already taken place and have approved of the drafting of constitutions: Bobbin manufacture, boot and shoe manufacture, electricity (power and supply), roller engraving, and woollen and worsted.

In the case of some 20 other industries the associations concerned are giving careful consideration to the question of the formation of a joint industrial council, and in some of them arrangements have been made for summoning joint conferences.

George R. Roberts, Minister of Labour, reported on August 24, 1918, that 9 councils were in existence, 19 in process of formation, and 20 in other trades in preliminary conferences. At the close of 1918, so rapid had been the movement, he could report:

National joint industrial councils have been established and have held one or more full council meetings in the following (twenty) industries, namely, baking, bedsteads, bobbins, building, chemical trade, china, clay, furniture, gold, silver, horological and allied trades, hosiery, leather goods, matches, paint and varnish, pottery, rubber, silk, vehicle building, woollen and worsted (Scottish section). In the case of each of these councils the members are showing considerable eagerness to get to grips with the important reconstruction and other problems which are facing their industries and very satisfactory progress has already been made in many directions. In four other industries, namely, municipalities (iron-trading services), waterworks, saw-milling, and surgical instruments, the dates for the first meeting of these councils have been fixed. Twelve other industries, namely, boot and shoe, cable-making, commercial road transport, electrical contracting, electricity (power and supply), needles and fish-hooks, newspapers, paper-making, printing, roller engraving, tin mining, woollen and worsted, have already established provisional committees to draw up constitutions for joint industrial councils, and the proceedings have reached an advanced stage in many of these cases. In a number of other indus-

tries the Ministry of Labour is giving assistance in setting up councils. The government have approved a scheme dealing with the application of the Whitley report to the industrial establishment of the government, and immediate steps are being taken to place the scheme before the trade unions and departments concerned. A sub-committee of the interdepartmental committee on the application of the Whitley Report to government establishments is considering the question of its application to the clerical and administrative classes of the civil service. Arrangements have been made for hearing evidence from representatives of civil service associations.

An official leaflet has recently been issued entitled "Industrial Councils: The Recommendations of the Whitley Report," which gives an outline of the principal recommendations of the report, in order that they may be made as widely known as possible among the members of employers' and workpeople's associations. The sections of the leaflet dealing with "Industrial Councils and the Government" and "The Need for Industrial Councils" are as follows:

### *Industrial Councils and the Government*

The primary object of Industrial Councils then is to regularize the relations between employers and employed. But they will serve another urgent need and, in so doing, will give to workpeople a status in their respective industries that they have not had hitherto. There is a large body of problems which belong both to industry and to politics.

They belong to politics, because the community is responsible for their solution and the state must act as if no other provision is made; they belong to industry, because they can be solved only by the knowledge and experience of the people actually engaged in industry. Such problems are the regularization of employment, industrial training, utilization of inventions, industrial research, the improvement of designs and quality, legislation affecting workshop conditions—all of them questions which have hitherto been left in the main to employers, but which in reality constitute an important common interest on the basis of which all engaged in an industry can meet. The termination of the war will bring with it a mass of new problems of this nature; for example, demobilization, the training of apprentices whose apprenticeship was interrupted by military service, the settlement in industry of partially disabled men, and, in general, the reconversion of industry to the purposes of peace. It is urgently necessary that the government should be able to obtain without delay the experience and views of the people actually in industry on all these questions. It proposes, therefore, to treat Industrial Councils as Standing Consultative Committees to the government and the normal channel through which it will seek the experience and advice of industries. Further, many of these problems can be handled by each industry by itself, provided that

it has an organization representative of all sections and interests within it. The establishment of Industrial Councils will, therefore, make unnecessary a large amount of "government interference," which is at present unavoidable, and substitute for it a real measure of "self-government" in industry.

### *The Need for Industrial Councils*

While there is no doubt that every industry has problems which can be solved only if the experience of every grade and section of the industry is brought to bear on them, hitherto the tendency has been for every grade and section to go its own way. Whenever the government wishes to ascertain the needs and opinions of an industry, instead of one organization speaking with a single voice, a dozen organizations speak with a dozen voices. The different sections and interests are organized and can put their point of view; the industry as a whole has no representative organization, so that the general interest of the industry may be overlooked. Sectional interests often conflict; there is no need for example to disguise the conflict of interests between employers and employed; and the Whitley Report proposes nothing of the nature of compulsory arbitration, nothing that will limit or interfere with the right to lockout or strike. But no one in industry wants an unnecessary stoppage; these can be prevented only by the representatives of conflicting interests meeting to thrash out their differences; and all the problems that will face industry after the war call for continuous consultation and coöperation of all sections, grades, and interests. For every reason, therefore, industrial councils, fully representative of all sections and interests in each industry, are an urgent necessity.

In some industries there exist already joint conciliation boards performing some of the functions of industrial councils. These are, however, as a rule, limited either in the work they undertake or in the sections of the industry which they represent. Although, therefore, existing joint boards will in many cases provide the basis for industrial councils, they cannot handle the problems, referred to above, with which the industries of the country will be faced after the war. What is needed is an organization representing the whole industry and capable of speaking for all the firms and all the work-people employed in it. The government's adoption of the Whitley Report is simply an invitation to the industries of the country to organize themselves in this way, for their own benefit and for the benefit of the community.

To summarize Part IV: we have shown the movement toward workers' control manifested in spontaneous action by the workers themselves through the shop stewards, the railwaymen, the miners, the higher officials of the engineers, and others. We have shown it furthered by progressive employers, such as Renold, and Rown-



tree. We have shown the government promoting it in the controlled munitions factories, in the civil service and through the Whitley Reports.

It remains to be brought out that the area over which these going experiments operate is the area of workshop and factory conditions and processes. But the area of production is vastly wider than this. The democratic government of the factory is not self-government in industry. It is a first step. British industrial history of the next fifty years will be concerned with larger applications. The control of workshop conditions and processes is not control of the product. As Cole says:

Capitalist control of the product has three principal aspects. It is expressed in the financial system by which the great investors and syndicates regulate the flow of capital; in the control of raw materials—buying, and in the control of the finished product—selling.

As a war measure the Control Board in the Woollen and Worsted Industries determined the allocation of the wool available for the civilian trade, and regulated the hours and conditions of working. This Board of Control consisted of thirty-three members, eleven nominated by the War Office, eleven by the employers' associations, eleven by the trade unions. An Order in Council defined the powers of the board. Thus the distribution of raw material as well as labor conditions passed under collective democratic control. A loosely organized private industry has been lifted to the level of a responsible national service under the mutual economic government of employers, employees and the public.

In the spring of 1918, Dr. Addison (then Minister of Reconstruction) called a meeting of Associations of Employers and Trade Unions in the saddlery, harness and equipment, light leather goods, and belting industries. He said he wished to receive suggestions for "a joint council about raw material requirements."

The Cotton Control Board in Lancashire has 21 members, representing the spinners and manufacturers, cotton associations, a Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Trade, and the trade unions. It has power to fix the price daily. George A. Greenwood in the *English World's Work* for December, 1918, says that these woollen and cotton boards show that

the government may claim as a function the protection of the larger mass of consumers from either cornering or profiteering on the part of the smaller body of producers. Employers, guaranteed their fair share of raw material, may be told at what they must sell. Not less important is the establishment in practice of the right of the trade unions to a voice in the control of industry.

The Ministry of Labour states that one of the questions where the government will need the united and considered opinion of each large industry (management and workers) is the control of raw materials. The councils will be recognized as the official standing consultative committees to the government. It is intended that industrial councils should play a definite and permanent part in the economic life of the country.

Thus the area of self-government in industry widens. The old order of autocratic management is passing. The new order of industrial democracy begins slowly, painfully, to be established.

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The forces at work at the elbow of every British wage earner are now before us; forces which reacted cumulatively upon the war time development of the political labor movement (as interpreted in Part III); and impelled both the economic and political arms of the movement—the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party—to claim a hearing for the workers in war and in peace and to reach out toward corresponding groups in other countries (as interpreted in Parts I and II). In Part V, we shall follow these various strands of interest throughout 1918—economic, political, inter-Allied, international—and endeavor to throw light on the relation borne toward them by American labor and the American Republic, both of which might be presupposed to be sympathetic toward the struggle for democracy of the mother country at home as well as in the field.

PART V  
THE NEW ALIGNMENT





## CHAPTER XVII

### THE JUBILEE YEAR OF THE BRITISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS

IF an unsophisticated citizen of the United States had arrived in Derby on September 1, 1918, or thereabouts, he would have spent the first hours of his visit asking questions. He would have wanted to know why it was that, with paper at famine prices, leaflets were falling on delegates like "blessed rain from Heaven." He would have wanted to know why it was that the head of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union should erect a large marquee in the Market Square and invite all who cared to do so to take lunch with him without charge. He would have wanted to know what the prime minister of Australia was doing at this lunch (besides eating his share of it) and why, himself a labor leader, he should go out of his way to revile ideals which generations of working men in all countries had agreed to keep sacred.

He would have wanted to know why, if the leaders of British trades unionism thought it proper to boycott this lunch, veteran Samuel Gompers, whom, as representing the United States, everybody delighted to honor, thought it proper to be present at it. He might even have wanted to know who paid for the lunch, and whether the function of a brass band, which made much noise during the proceedings, was to conceal the paucity of applause called forth by the somewhat acidulous eloquence of Premier Hughes.

"It would not be possible to answer all the questions of such a visitor," wrote a British correspondent to *The Survey*, "but one might tell him in general terms that the trade union world was increasing its power and prestige by leaps and bounds; that it now numbered nearly five million adherents, including three-quarters of a million women, and that the inrush was continuing and quickening; that all but a few of these members would have votes under the Representation of the People Act, and that, in consequence, the political power of the unions would also be increased and might, in the future, be decisive; that this prospect was leading to many attempts to 'nobble' labor and would probably produce an epidemic of free lunches, at most of which the prime minister of Australia (who had become so devoted to the British Islands that he had apparently forgotten his own) might be expected to be present. As for Samuel

Gompers, one would say that after all he had not spoken as ferociously as our yellow press had led us to expect him to do; that doubtless he had failed as yet accurately to take his bearings and that when he had done so, his native acumen would probably lead him to select his luncheon parties with greater care.

"And with this prelude one would leave the visitor to enter the congress in the sure hope that with open eyes and ears he could not fail to arrive at just conclusions."

It is as little possible as it is desirable to refer to all the resolutions adopted by this fifth annual meeting in war-time of the British Trades Union Congress, this fiftieth since its founding. The address of the chairman and the subsequent debates gave chief place to questions we shall explore in this and succeeding chapters, such questions as the dispute on passports, the attempts to form a purely trade union political party, the antagonisms which threatened to separate the congress from the Labour Party on the one hand and from the General Federation of Trades Unions on the other, the question most of all of the war policy of British labor;—the relation to these questions of the American labor leadership.

If ever modesty, sincerity and disinterestedness spoke out of the mouth of a man it spoke out of the mouth of J. W. Ogden. Ogden is not a lion of the world of labor, but he is endeared to it by qualities of the head and the heart. Lancashire weavers, of whom he is one, are said to say little and think a lot. That certainly is Ogden's way. One feels in listening to him that he talks merely because he has something imperative to say. And again like the weavers, he abhors rhetoric or any type or degree of overemphasis or exaggeration. In his address to the congress appeared the candor and exactitude of his mind and the care, even the pains, with which he had worked his way to convictions.

Havelock Wilson and his colleagues have never loved the political Labour Party, and now, aided by Hughes and some scores of camp followers, they were seeking under various pretenses to disrupt it. Ogden, without mentioning them, sent a heavy censure in their direction. Experience had taught him that unless working men act together in politics they cannot act together successfully in industry.

On another subject, that of the struggle threatening to become bitter between craft and industrial unions, Ogden had something to say of interest to American labor organizers. Between the conflicting claims of these types of union, the Parliamentary Committee of the British Congress has some jurisdiction, but it is not enough to enable it to penetrate the tangle of overlapping federations, confederations and amalgamations and the interests and

jealousies that have grown up in these. The policy of President Ogden was one that might be derided if its author were less experienced, sober and shrewd—the proposal of one all-embracing trade union within which, with expert help, the wage-earners might place themselves in their natural logical groups.

But it was on the overhanging issues of war and peace that Ogden's speech was of most effect. That there was any weakening in the determination of the British democracy to attain the objects for which the nation entered the war, or any attempt (in dealing with the labor movement in enemy countries) to trespass on the functions of central government, he denied. The labor movement, however, had the power to render moral support to the armies that fight for democracy as it had the duty to assist mankind to achieve righteousness and peace. The "awful work" of the sword had been done for four years and was still to do. Labor could no longer be supine. Ogden stood, therefore, for conference while war was on between the several labor movements, not to negotiate a peace, which is a function of central government, but to exchange views, remove misunderstandings and perhaps show governments the way to reunite humanity over the chasm in which its youth and happiness had been rapidly perishing. "Godspeed to the International," cried Ogden, and the solemn audience all but echoed "Amen."

This weaver's speech, in which any one who desired to might find the heart of British labor laid bare, prepared the way for a discussion on peace in which the standing committee submitted a resolution. The resolution (page 264) reaffirmed the demand of the Blackpool congress twelve months earlier for an international conference, requested the labor parties of the Central Powers to table their answer to the war aims memorandum drawn seven months earlier by the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference at London and called upon the government to open negotiations as soon as the enemy, voluntarily or by compulsion, evacuated France and Belgium. It lost nothing by being committed to J. H. Thomas. Americans are acquainted with his buoyant and virile personality. His present commanding place in labor politics is due as much to his insight and generalship as to his extraordinary energy and staying power. It owes a little also to the sense of fun which made him during the congress a thorn in the flesh of Havelock Wilson and the destroyer of most of that gentleman's platitudes. At a great open-air "pro-Ally demonstration," Thomas turned up in the audience, and, after Havelock Wilson had uttered his usual plea for a five years' boycott of Germany, went on to the platform ostensibly to support that proposition. Poor Wilson's face grew

longer as the speech of his supporter proceeded. At the end of the meeting when the crowd had forgotten the "boycott" and were cheering rapturously for a league of nations, it would have made an inimitable "Melancholia."

Later at the Congress when the boycott resolution did duty once again and Wilson buttressed it with a sweeping attack on internationalism and "peace by negotiation," Thomas made the hit of the week by reading a quotation from which it appeared that Wilson himself, at a conference of his union subsequent to the sinking of the *Lusitania*, had resisted "from an international point of view" substantially the very resolution that he was now intemperately supporting.

Moving the peace resolution, Thomas added to his successes in a speech of unusual dignity and power illumined by a declaration that British labor would not "sacrifice one life to add a yard to the territory of the empire" and by a demand that the Allies should state their terms once and for all so these would not change with the war map as did the terms of the Germans. Here again Wilson was an obscurantist, and though the resolution was in the nature of a compromise between the dominant groups in the congress, he struck at it viciously. His friends in other tussles, however, lightly abandoned him in this, and the resolution was adopted with practical unanimity. [See Chapter XXI.]

Peace was again the theme when a day later delegates from the United States and Canada and from the British Labour Party brought to the congress the fraternal greetings of their organizations. Samuel Gompers (the lunch forgotten) was naturally hero of this occasion and was given an ovation as a patriarch of labor, such as any leader might treasure. His speech, as well as his presence, was cheered. British democracy counts association with America as the biggest event not only of the war but of modern history, and Gompers could not too often refer to it. The Boer War and Home Rule are less easy themes, but on neither of them did the veteran speak too strongly for the taste of his audience. British labor does not equivocate either on Ireland or South Africa, and it would gladly concede to these peoples the right it is asserting for others.

Henderson, who followed Gompers, frankly admitted that the British and American labor organizations were not in accord on the proposed international labor conference. Their aims were, however, identical, and the difference in method might be minimized or removed at the forthcoming Allied Labour Conference in London. Henderson in resounding sentences came near to repeating his great triumph of twelve months before. He was stirring



in repudiating any aspersions on the determination of British labor, stirring in glorifying the crusade which the two nations were pursuing together against imperialism, stirring most of all in proclaiming the beneficence of the sovereignty soon to be wielded by a league of nations.

Henderson left these capital questions for a moment to strike obliquely at the proposal to form a separate trade union political party. It should be noted that those who initiated this proposal were chiefly trade union leaders who in the past had denied the necessity for any political labor party at all. Havelock Wilson and W. J. Davis, for example, are ancient members of the Liberal Party whose attitude to labor candidates was from the start one of consistent hostility. Their case against the British Labour Party was then that it was too narrow and sectarian; now, that the party had altered its constitution and admits individual members who subscribe to the party objects as well as those who come in indirectly as members of trade unions or socialist organizations. The party is too wide! Davis expressed horror that out of four labor candidates adopted for Birmingham, one was a lawyer and two were doctors—without understanding that the precise object of enlarging the scope of the party was to bring into it men of the professional classes exactly as such men are brought into the socialist and labor parties on the continent. The debate soon betrayed its unreality and showed Wilson making one more attempt for some obscure purpose of his own, to frustrate the hopes which the new Labour Party was inspiring in all parts of the United Kingdom. That the congress knew how to reward his plotting was shown by a contemptuous dismissal of the resolution. [See Chapter XXI.]

The quarrel between the General Federation of Trade Unions and the combined Labour Party and Trades Union Congress grew out of the lethargy of the last named body in the realm of international affairs. On the other hand, the federation's activity achieved a prominence abroad unsupported either by the membership of the federation or the part accredited it in the British trade union scheme. The original function of the federation was to facilitate the insurance of unions against the heavy liabilities of strikes. Insofar as it goes beyond this function, it collides with the Trades Union Congress, which is generally recognized as the body entitled to pronounce on industrial issues, or with the Labour Party which similarly has held jurisdiction in political affairs. The confusion between these bodies led, after his arrival and before, to a struggle for the body of Samuel Gompers, Appleton of the federation and Bowerman of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union

Congress busily arranging conferences for the distinguished visitor that conflicted with each other. [See Chapters XIX and XXII.]

The question of passports raised the congress to much indignation. Even delegates who could see a certain reason in the refusal to permit British labor leaders to meet or treat with members of enemy countries, could see none at all in the denial of a passport to enable their elected representative, Margaret Bondfield, to transmit their greetings to the American Federation of Labor. They resented, too, the hypocrisy of the denial. Admitting that a war regulation prohibited women and children from traveling overseas save in cases of exceptional and urgent necessity, they pointed out that the regulation had been waived in the case of Mrs. Pankhurst. Why was the government more solicitous for the safety of Miss Bondfield than for that of Mrs. Pankhurst, or, alternately, in what was the business of Mrs. Pankhurst, who represented nobody but herself, more "exceptional and urgent" than the business of Miss Bondfield, the representative of wage-earners numbered in millions?

It was with justice that delegates alleged a claim on the part of the government to decide exactly what type of trade union opinion it would allow to be represented in America, and with an elementary exercise of proper spirit that steps were taken to contest the claim by this, the industrial commons of Great Britain.

For this jubilee meeting, which reaffirmed the attitude of trade union England toward the continuance of the war, toward an imperialistic peace and toward the "diplomacy of democracy"—which reasserted the cohesion of the forces of labor against the efforts to separate the industrial and political arms of the movement,—and which sustained the leadership of that "new majority" which we saw crystallize in the conferences twelve months before,—this meeting in itself represented the largest membership of wage earners ever mustered into one national body. Small wonder that the impulses toward self-determination aroused by the war should assert themselves here.

In 1868, when the first congress met in Manchester, 34 delegates were present, and they represented 118,367 members of trade unions. The Derby Congress was attended by nearly 900 delegates representing between four and five million members. "The numerical progress of the Congress during this half century," said the *London Times*, "is a rough measure of its growth in power as the instrument for expressing the political and social views and aspirations of the working people." "The power of labor has doubled during the war," said the British Premier in welcoming President Gompers to England, a fortnight earlier. As compared

even with the Congress at Blackpool the year before, the meeting showed a remarkable advance in point of numbers, for the return of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, which had held aloof for several years, the adhesion of the Workers' Union and the Ironfounders' Society and the increase in the membership of other unions, had raised the strength of the Congress during the year by nearly 500,000 affiliated members.

On the whole, it was a great and encouraging congress, great in its unprecedented numbers and encouraging in that it kept its faith and its equilibrium and refused to be led away from the great objects which trade unionism has immediately to gain. It was, however, also a congress of undercurrents which Havelock Wilson busily kept in motion. The lavish expenditure of money, his own or somebody's else, by this labor official aroused comment which was not lessened by Thomas' revelation of the suddenness of the spender's conversion to the policy of the economic boycott. What, to put it bluntly, was Wilson after? There were many replies to this question, but the reply having most support was suggested by a representative of the ship stewards, who told Wilson that there was "political faking" behind his crusade, and deplored the circumstance that "the dead bodies of seamen should be used in playing the low-down game of tariff reform."

#### CROSS CURRENTS IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

The nature of those currents will be clearer if we retrace some of the events of the months preceding Derby which had revealed the tensile strength of the "new majority," in the political and economic fields. Political developments and the part which American labor, wittingly or unwittingly, came to play in them will be taken up in later chapters. Here, let us deal with friction between the government and the workers in the industrial field;—strikes on a scale which, whatever their justification, might jeopardize the supreme business the nation had in hand, and, more, the outcroppings on the extreme left of mass sentiment for direct economic action to force the government to begin negotiations and end the war.

In the early winter of 1917-18, the belief that there was a military stalemate on the western front and a feeling of impotence in pressing the government to outflank it by democratic statesmanship, were current in all walks of life in England. They found characteristic expression in the industrial centers in demonstrations against any coercive measures associated with the government's war policies. Moreover, the rise of Bolshevism to power

in Russia, was not without its reaction in working-class circles the world over.

The background of social unrest to the Nottingham meeting in January, 1918, has been brought out. Within the following fortnight there was a clash in the munitions trades over the application of the man-power bill and we find Henderson, on the one hand, urging the government to meet the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in conference, in line with what its members understood to have been a pledge, and, on the other hand, charging the workers not to lay down tools in an effort to coerce the government to begin peace negotiations. He said (February, 1918):

We are all weary of war. Immediate peace is the greatest need of the world. But peace cannot be achieved by one section of labor acting by itself. Peace will come when the working-class movement as a whole has discovered by conference the conditions of an honorable and democratic peace worthy of the unimaginable sacrifices the people have made.

The temper of the workmen is most dangerous. The unyielding attitude of the government is bringing the country to the verge of industrial revolution, and unless a more just and reasonable attitude is adopted I am seriously apprehensive that an irreparable break between an important section of industrial labor and the government will result. . . .

In the past, labor has responded with real patriotism, fully and freely. Is it too much to appeal to the patriotism of the government? I strongly urge the government to display a more reasonable spirit.

Hasty measures of the kind contemplated may not only embarrass those of us who are trying to promote a moral and political offensive on the part of the working classes and destroy their unity. They also may give to the reactionary forces further opportunities to divide and weaken our efforts. Democratic diplomacy has begun. . . . Peace must be made on these terms and on no other. That is our policy. It will be presented as a moral ultimatum to the governments from an organized democracy in all the belligerent governments. I appeal in all earnestness to the workers not to wreck this great triumph of the international working-class movement in the field of diplomacy by a precipitate action which can only end in discrediting and defeating the democratic cause.

During the sobering weeks ushered in by the enemy offensive in March, British labor closed its ranks before the threat of a military decision against the Allies. Meetings of district and national unions voted down resolutions declaring that the war was being prolonged for materialistic and capitalistic objects, and that labor should cease its support of the government. The National



Union of Dock Labourers (James Sexton, secretary) sent a circular appealing to the workers to put aside any grievances they might have and "to put in all they know how" in the greatest crisis the nation had ever faced. Sexton is of the right; but turn to the miners, under the lead of Smillie of the left. The miners had just tallied an adverse ballot on whether they approved a further comb-out in the coal fields. In many union quarters, the comb-out was mistrusted as a move calculated to weaken the strength of the unions, eliminate their organizers and favor the dilutes. When the German drive began, the Prime Minister placed the army's necessities before representatives of the federation. The executive thereupon recommended that the miners use the federation's own machinery to facilitate the comb-out. Moreover, a new flow of volunteering set in which, in time, with the loss of French pits, actually became a source of national embarrassment. In the munition trades, the Prime Minister had on February 28 and March 8 cut the tangle as to negotiations by himself receiving a deputation from the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and a compromise had been arrived at; but on March 21, an unofficial conference at Manchester passed drastic resolutions for a general strike on April 6, unless orders for the comb-out were previously withdrawn. Here again, the effect of the German offensive was instant and complete, and the arrangements committee responsible for calling the Manchester conference rescinded the resolutions there passed.

#### THE IRISH CRISIS

Moreover, when in the midst of the crisis, the government came forward with its dual conscription-home-rule policy for Ireland, British labor did not content itself with mere parliamentary opposition to the former and advocacy of the latter.

J. H. Thomas went to Ireland. His address at a meeting on April 28 in the Mansion House, Dublin, on "Conscription: Is a Solution Possible?" as reported in the *Times* is a good reflection of the attitude at the crisis of the "new majority." It at once was a clear statement of British labor's opposition to coercive militarism by whomsoever practised; and a ringing verdict as to where the scales tipped between the British cause and the Prussian:

Mr. Thomas said he voted against conscription. (A voice: Why did you go on recruiting platforms?) He could not consistently oppose conscription unless he did something for voluntarism. (Hisses.) He asked Irishmen to try to understand his point of view. He had opposed conscription, when he had been howled down

in Parliament and ridiculed and condemned, but he stuck to his ground because he believed that conscription was wrong. He had taken his stand on recruiting because he believed that Belgium had been violated. (A laugh.) He did not apologize for it. He believed that when Belgium was violated there was a moral obligation upon him to fight the Germans, and he was glad to say that many Irishmen acted on the same idea. Just as he felt then that he would fight against brute force and take his stand against any Power that assumed that might was right, so he took his stand to-day, in spite of any opposition, sneers, or jeers, and he said that he would rather that he himself and his family should be entirely wiped out than that he should see the Germans ruling in his country. Those who listened to him might take the opposite view. (Cries of "We don't.") But if they did they had no right to deny him his point of view.

British labor was not blind to the fact that conscription was foreign to their principles and to liberty; that it entrenched militarism, and that they had got to fight as strenuously against the setting up of English militarism as against German militarism. Feeling as he did that on principle, apart from any question of expediency, conscription was wrong, he entirely agreed that nothing was so mean and so contemptible as the suggestion that Home Rule was to be given to them as a bargain for accepting something that they absolutely detested. (Cries of "We don't want it.") As one who believed in self-determination, he resented as bitterly as Irishmen did that such a bargain should be proposed. Nothing in his judgment showed such a want of statesmanship as the action of the Government in that connection. He believed in Home Rule because he believed that it was impossible to govern a country against the wishes and will of the people. Welshmen and Scotchmen, as well as Irishmen, said precisely the same thing—that no British Government could govern them as well as they themselves could.

Looking at the position honestly and dispassionately, he said that the war had brought problems that compelled consideration of the question of Irish self-government in a different light. He believed that a profound blunder had been made, and the Government must retrieve that blunder. Therefore he asked Irishmen not to be swayed by passion or carried away by resentment, but to realize that, serious as their position had been in the past, it was nothing comparable with the gravity and seriousness of the position now.

A tragedy was likely to arise if common sense, prudent statesmanship, and above all confidence in each other, were not exercised to avert it. (Cheers.) He begged them to believe that the British democracy was anxious to do justice to Ireland, and he asked them to remember that nothing would be more fatal to the interests of Irish workers, or the interests of British workers, than a rupture between those of both countries. There was not a home in Great Britain where the father and mother were not throbbing with anxiety for some one far away. Referring to an interruption, he said it was lost on one whose boy was fighting at the front. A

victory for Germany would be the end both of liberty and of democracy; and they had no right to challenge the honor of those who were prepared to lay down their lives for the cause of the Allies.

#### THE LABOR EMBARGOES

By midsummer, with the German drive blunted and turned back, restlessness at industrial conditions at home again asserted itself, and there came a series of strikes of London police, the tube and bus-women, the munitions workers, and the railroaders. Old impatience at the government's foreign policy reawakened; old suspicions that profiteering and anti-union interests were, under cover of the war, driving an entering wedge for sweated labor and industrial conscription.

Allegations of attempts to break down trade union standards came out in the traction strike when a committee representing the employees gave out a statement on July 28 saying:

Women are receiving less wages than men, in our case by 12s. 6d., and we wish the country to know that we have secured definite evidence that the railways in general have been refusing to employ discharged soldiers and are employing women instead at a lower rate of wages.

This is a serious matter to soldiers who have been promised their jobs on their return, and it is even more serious for those men who will be demobilized at the end of the war. If they are to be faced by the competition of cheaper women labor, the period of reconstruction will be marked by great unrest throughout the labor world, which will be a danger to the welfare of the whole country.

Women, practically all of whom have husbands or sons at the front, are determined that they are not going to cheapen labor at the expense of the soldiers.

The issue of industrial conscription came up in the midlands. The spring comb-out and volunteering had cut down the supply of skilled labor at the same time that an augmented demand for various kinds of munitions made the need for such labor acute. Certain firms were charged with engrossing more than their fair share by "labor poaching," and the Ministry of Munitions issued an embargo on three of them in Coventry. It added to a list of bureaucratic blunders in the past by failing to explain its course to the workers. One of the firms (the Hotchkiss Company) distributed a provocative notice to foremen which fell into the hands of the shop stewards. This notice stated that they were prohibited from engaging "skilled men" of any type and defined the term

as meaning any men in receipt of the standard district rate. It went on to say that every effort must be made "whenever it is necessary to employ men, to make use only of semi-skilled or unskilled men." "The circulation among skilled men of such a statement without any explanation," said the *Times*, editorially, "was like throwing lighted matches about a filling factory. It would look to them like the beginning of a campaign to oust them out of employment, drive them into the army and lower wages. We can hardly wonder that they took alarm." They did just that—struck against the advice of the local union committee and the strike spread to Birmingham.

It should be remembered that as a body the skilled men in the munition trades had not in any sense been slackers. Earlier in the war the pressure of both government and public opinion was brought to bear upon them to keep them at their crucial posts in the rapidly expanding war industries, and to bring back those who had enlisted. The way the situation provoked by the embargo was approached from four different angles was illuminating and characteristic:

(a) To quote a news report:

The Minister of Munitions (Winston Churchill) made a belated movement to bring the facts before the workmen by distributing handbills and announced by public proclamation that any person who was guilty of inciting others to leave work, or took any part in organizing a strike, rendered himself liable to very serious penalties under the Defence of the Realm Act. The Ministry also gave a significant reminder to the young men in munition factories that only the fact that they were absolutely needed at their work, and were loyally willing to do their work, had justified their exemption from military service.

(b) The Minister of Labour (George Roberts), addressing the London Master Printers' Association, admonished those "misled people" that were striking.

against the state, against the government, who were sharing all the responsibility—a heavy responsibility under the most favorable circumstances—of prosecuting the war to the only issue they could contemplate, the absolute success of the Allied cause . . . Public opinion would agree that those men ought not to be exempted from the operations of those [Military Service] acts.

(c) J. Havelock Wilson, of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union, issued a message:



The seamen and firemen who daily risk and sacrifice their lives to carry food to the working men and their families appeal to the trades unionists involved in munitions dispute not to betray their country. Never mind government departments, employers, embargoes, or other inconveniences. When we have won the war we will support you through thick and thin in maintaining the principles of trades unionism, for which some of us have worked and suffered all our lives. Don't be misled by the Bolshies, who are the greatest enemies of trades unionism. Fifteen thousand non-combatant seafaring men have been foully murdered by the Huns. Are you going to fight the Government over an embargo instead of doing your bit to destroy Prussian militarism and all it stands for?

(d) J. H. Thomas, M. P., speaking at a large meeting of railwaymen at Weston-super-Mare, said:

The attention of the country focused on the prospect of a serious dispute in the engineering industry. To those who were abusing the engineers he would say, "Stop this fooling," and to the engineers themselves his words were, "Don't forget the nation's difficulty. Don't forget what is due to our soldiers at the front, and, above all, remember that loyalty to your own executive is a fundamental of trade unionism." It ought not to be impossible for the present trouble to be adjusted.

As it was: the government appointed a Committee on Labour Embargoes consisting of representatives of employers and employees, under the presidency of Justice McCardie, which recommended that changes in government policy with respect to munition work should be "immediately and effectively" communicated to employers and workmen concerned, both centrally and locally, to secure their confidence and coöperation, and that a joint committee consisting of the representatives of both should be established forthwith, under a chairman appointed by the government, to advise the Admiralty and Ministry of Munitions on such matters.

#### THE RAILROAD FLARE-UP

Here we had responsible leaders of the new majority, like Thomas, throwing their weight against either bureaucrats or employers who ran roughshod over constitutional labor procedure at a time when a stoppage of work was of national concern. Shortly thereafter, we find these leaders joining issue with forces which flouted it from the opposite quarter.

The National Union of Railwaymen is the largest single trade union in Great Britain, with a membership of 400,000, and branches throughout the country to the number of 1300; Thomas, as gen-

eral secretary, received the largest vote given any officer. At the annual conference at Edinburgh, in June, he pointed out that "without once having to threaten or attempt a stoppage of work, the union had succeeded in improving the condition of its members, at the same time keeping clearly in mind their responsibility to the nation engaged in a life and death struggle." An insurgent strike among the railwaymen broke out in September (1918), a fortnight following the Derby Conference, and Thomas went to the mat.

The South Wales miners had by a threat of strike secured an increase of nine shillings a week. The railway men wanted ten, and as result of negotiations between the government and a delegate conference were awarded five—equivalent to a cumulative increase of 120 per cent over their pre-war wage. Moreover, machinery was provided for automatic revisions to meet further increases. This provision does not seem to have been generally understood. The South Wales railwaymen returned from the negotiations dissatisfied, holding that the settlement should not have been accepted without a mandate from the full membership of the union. The enginemen,<sup>1</sup> the highest paid, believed that their increase was not proportionate. Ten men on a branch line quit; a self-constituted strike committee set up at Newport, and within two days the strike had spread to London. While it involved a comparatively small number of men, they were so placed that traffic was tied up on the Great Western; 100,000 miners were thrown out of work; food, hospital and troop train service was interrupted. Charges were subsequently made in the London papers that the strike was instigated by stop-the-war propagandists. It was at least a sectional effort in which the rank and file sought to take things into their own hands, demanding either the concession of their full demand or the reopening of negotiations in which the government should treat not with the recognized officers, but with delegates to be appointed by the strikers.

The Board of Trade put its case in a statement issued at midnight on September 23:

. . . It is obvious that unless there is some authority which can negotiate and accept a settlement on behalf of the men, and which is loyally accepted by all the men concerned, it is impossible to carry on any negotiations with a view to arriving at a settlement.

The action of these men is not only a strike against their union, but is a direct challenge against all ordered government. A strike of any section of railway employees at this critical period, when

<sup>1</sup> In part, organized separately in the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.

the news from all fronts is so very encouraging, can only be attended with the gravest consequences to this country and to our Allies. . . .

It is gratifying that only a small section of the railwaymen have not accepted the settlement made by their leaders, and the thanks of the government and the nation are due to the railwaymen who are loyally abiding by the agreement to perform their duties in a spirit of devotion to their country's interests which has been characteristic of railwaymen during the course of the war.

The government announced that it proposed to use the military and naval forces to secure the maintenance of essential service. The Great Western issued notice to the effect that unless men of military age immediately presented themselves for work, their exemption certificates would be cancelled. An interim injunction was secured to prevent the unions from paying strike pay; 3000 men of the London Rifle Brigade were dispatched in trains manned by Royal Engineers and were bivouacked in the streets of Newport. But the only clash came when a number of wounded soldiers visited the local I. L. P. headquarters, and mistaking a knot of railwaymen for the strike committee, cried "over the top" and made a rush for them, belaboring them with their sticks and crutches.

The strike was fought and terminated not by these manifestations of authority; but by the spear-head of leadership of a single man, who posted to Newport, spoke to the crowds, forced his way into the strike committee, obliged them to let him lay the whole case before the men and nailed various untruths that had circulated. That man was Thomas. He stood up to an hour's cross-questioning and his replies were cheered again and again. He gave out a statement to the press in which he said:

I desire to warn any of our members who may feel inclined to act in sympathy with the strikers that this is a strike against the government as well as against the railway companies and their own union. It occurs at a time when the fortunes of the war seem brightest, and when the dawn of peace appears near. Words cannot express my disappointment and grief that the railwaymen are, by this unfortunate action, prejudicing a record of war service as proud as any that can be claimed by other workmen. . . . I am sorry, but I can understand the bitterness that has been displayed by the wounded soldiers and the public. My task is a difficult one, but I shall continue to struggle here to prevent the spread of a policy which will be as disastrous to the men as it is fatal to the interests of the country.

It was a fellow trade unionist in the government who, with the stoppage of traffic on the Great Western, got food through on motor

lorries, and churns of milk to the London hospitals; a fellow member of the new majority who in a "message to the strikers" backed up Thomas in his difficult and successful task. The message from Clynes read:

What workmen would have looked on as a crime in the first year or two of the war, is not less an offence against their reputation and the national interest, now that democratic principles are being so gallantly defended by millions of our men in the field. . . . A few years ago railway men fought valiantly and successfully to get recognition for their leaders and executives. They therefore ought now to recognize and respect the bargain made by their leaders for them. Let them think not only of the credit of their unions, but of the appalling prospect of what our food situation would be if supplies are seriously checked by railway dislocation while the war continues.

Thomas, the succeeding day, carried his cause to a meeting at Cardiff of the South Wales council of the union, a body representative of all the branches in the district. The correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote of the "undaunted stand" and "courageous speech" of this two fisted fighting man, with his hard sayings, "wrestling strenuously with the judgments of both strikers and non-strikers."

The London *Times*' report of his speech at Cardiff follows:

Mr. Thomas, who was greeted with cries of "Good old Jim," said the decision to strike was conveyed by him to the government and he received the verdict of the War Cabinet in these words: "We accept the challenge of these men, not only as a challenge to your union and to your own authority, but as a challenge to the government, and not a comma of the agreement will be altered, even if the whole of the railwaymen of the country stop. What is more, let it be distinctly understood that we are going to discharge our functions as a government regardless of consequences." Mr. Thomas continued: "That is the issue you have to face. That is the issue I am going to face, and I tell you with all deliberation and sincerity that if I were Prime Minister, if I were a member of the War Cabinet (which I might have been), I would do precisely the same." (Cheers.) ". . . Are you going to strike at the backs of your own lads, and give encouragement to Germany? . . . You have forced 5,000,000 of your comrades, 100,000 of your fellow-workmen to hate your very name. This act has been done, let it be observed, by people who take no responsibility of leadership. I only desired to hold my position in your union so long as I had the confidence of the men"—("You have it")—"but this action shows I have not. I am going to see this out; then I cease to be your general secretary." ("No, no.") "I cannot go on hammering as I have for



years, with no rest, exhausting myself physically and mentally, fighting your battles regardless of personal considerations, only to be flouted at a critical hour."

The meeting, with only a dozen dissentients, voted to return to work at once; voted their confidence in Thomas. But he was not through. The strike ended, he submitted his resignation to the executive committee of the National Union of Railwaymen, on the ground that no other course was open to

one who believes in constitutional government in trade unionism; who believes that the same standard of honor demanded from the other side is the least we are prepared to give ourselves.

Moreover, whoever is responsible for the recent strike, a strike as wicked as it was dangerous, are people whose policy and methods must not only be challenged, but must be fought. Otherwise, we shall very soon reach a stage in this country similar to that through which Russia is now passing. Therefore, in taking this course, I do it as a challenge to such methods, and am prepared to bear all the consequences of my action.

The executive committee of the N. U. R. promptly declined to accept his resignation, but it was only expressions of confidence from 90 per cent of the membership which reconciled him to retaining office.<sup>1</sup> His good faith as a labor leader, his constitutional principles as a trade unionist, his stand on the war and his belief with Henderson in a united "moral and political offensive" as the channel for working-class action to secure a democratic settlement—all were at stake, and he rang true to that conception of British trade unionism which had found expression in its jubilee congress at Derby.

<sup>1</sup> Following the armistice, the evacuation of France and Belgium and the surrender of the German fleet, the railwaymen ended the strike truce they had faithfully kept as a national body throughout the war, and in December, 1918, under Thomas' leadership, demanded and won recognition of the principle of the 8 hour day.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE RIGHT STRIKES BACK

WHEN James Wilson, chairman of the mission of the American Federation of Labor, which visited England in the spring of 1918 at the expense of the British government, reached "an Atlantic port" on his return, he said in an interview with a reporter of the New York *Tribune*:—

When I speak of labor, I mean the actual workers of Britain. There is, of course, a Labour Party, which is a purely political organization headed by Ramsay MacDonald, Arthur Henderson and Philip Snowden.

He was quoted in the New York *Sun*:—

There are a certain class of people who term themselves leaders of labor who are in reality not workingmen, but members of a labor political party. The mission had opportunities to speak to thousands of workingmen, and in all cases the policy of the American Federation of Labor was received with cheers and practically unanimous approval. The purpose of the mission was to oppose the pacifist movement among labor abroad and to report the situation back to Samuel Gompers. The British workingmen are to have a new labor party, which will rid the ranks of the workers of the politicians who now are endeavoring to exploit labor.

Wilson then proceeded to name Henderson as one of these politicians.

These comments, seeking to drive a wedge into British labor and split it away from its majority leadership, were not only badly mixed and untrue; they were dangerous. Shouted across three thousand miles of water, like repartees over the back-fence, they were an aggravated continuation of the lectures against socialism and internationalism to which members of the American delegation treated British industrial centers like the Clyde. They gave a misleading account of British labor opinion, which had expressed itself through its two great bodies in unison. They were an attack on the Labour Party, as the weak and erring parasite of the industrial movement.

Whereas, the Labour Party is the political expression of British trade unionism. They were an attack on Arthur Henderson as the personification of that parasitism. Whereas, Arthur Henderson represented the Iron-founders' Society in the party conferences, and had a war record covering four years.

There was, for example, a moment when the shop stewards' movement was riding the Clyde—that congeries of shipbuilding and engineering trades—like wildfire. Henderson helped Lloyd George in backfiring. In doing it, he incurred the enmity of David Kirkwood, who, as set down in Chapter XIV, was “convener” of shop stewards. But he did it without throwing the entire shop stewards' movement to the revolutionary left. This is only one of the many services Henderson had rendered the nation. He could not have held labor together if he had swallowed government policy whole, with its weather-cock expediency in swinging from knock-out blows to the abandonment of Russia, from Irish Home Rule to Irish conscription.

The visit of the American labor delegation was an incident in the cross currents in British politics throughout 1918. To these we can turn, now that we have followed the course of the responsible labor leadership in the economic field. Just as that leadership had to reckon there with bureaucratic impingement from one side and sporadic upheaval from the other, so in the political field the new majority had to reckon with those elements which demarked themselves when Henderson broke with his fellow members of the war cabinet on Russian policy and on the issue of an inter-belligerent labor conference.

We have seen how, at that parting of the ways, in August, 1917, the government labor group represented by Barnes, Roberts, and Hodge gathered the skirts of denunciation about them and took up positions in opposition at the extreme right, while Philip Snowden, chairman of the Independent Labour Party, served warning from the extreme left that his impatient following would go its own gait; how, at Nottingham in January (1918), party regularity and the appeal of the new “diplomacy of democracy” brought an overwhelming vote behind the two-edged war aims program; how at London in February the prospect of a labor government and the vision of a reconstructed England carried the new constitution with its compromise between constituent trade union bodies and an open membership; how at London in June (1918) another compromise left it open for labor members to remain in the Ministry while giving the Labour Party freedom to contest bye-elections against coalition candidates. As result, at the end of twelve months—August to August—the new majority, while holding the ground occupied

by the labor movement as a whole since 1914 in support of the war as a defensive one against Prussian militarism, had more and more dissociated itself from the Lloyd George coalition government in both foreign policy and domestic politics.

The swing to the left had swept in the great trade union formation and the coöperative societies as well as the political movement, and the swing was unmistakably toward a peace unexploited by imperialism, toward a collectivism tempered by liberty.

For very opposite reasons, phases of this development had been irritating to both extremes.

#### THE I. L. P. AS A FREE LANCE

The swing was slow and step by step, while uncounted men went down in battle; also it created a new orthodoxy. The Independent Labour Party tugged at the leashes.

At its 26th annual conference at Leicester, at the end of March, 1918, the I. L. P. recorded the establishment of 153 new branches and a total gain of 50 per cent in membership (much of it the result of the last six months' work). It passed a so-called soldiers' charter, expressing its lively concern for the "decent treatment of the men who receive not much more than lip service from the professing patriots." This charter called for substantial increases in pay, separation allowances and pensions which "should be based on rates of civil wages and should respond to the great rise in the cost of living;"—for standard wages for discharged men regardless of their pensions;—for generous provision for the industrial training of the children of deceased soldiers;—for the fullest "possible measure of civil and political liberty" for soldiers and sailors;—for the abolition of the death penalty in the army, for means for legal defense at military trials and for representation of privates in courts martial;—for the adequate representation of self-governing associations of private soldiers on all committees dealing with the administration of war pensions and similar matters, etc.

In moving the charter, Ramsay MacDonald said:—

It must be taken as an indication of intention. It means fundamentally to say that the soldier is a man. When he is called up by the state he retains his human rights and his civic rights.

The conference passed radical resolutions on peace and civil liberties. The peace resolution was moved by Robert Smillie. The following report of his speech is taken from the I. L. P. press:—

Mr. Smillie was given a long and hearty welcome. He said several of his old comrades in the movement had told him he was



looking amazingly well. He was not nearly so well looking when they met him at the Labour Party conference or at the Trades Union Congress. "How can any one look well at the Labour Party conference or the Trades Union Congress?" he asked, and the delegates laughed and applauded.

"Attending the I. L. P. conference is like getting a breath of the sea," he continued, "swallowing the ozone. It gets into your lungs, into your blood, into your mind. I think if I could attend every year I would live for ever."

The soul of the conference, he thought, was in two or three of the resolutions, the resolution moved by Comrade MacDonald and the two on Peace and Liberty that were before them. Peace without liberty was not good enough. They must endeavor to secure peace, but while securing it they ought to protect the little liberty they had.

"Simmons has been sentenced to prison, and one of the clauses under which he was charged was: 'Any person who attempts to cause disaffection among the civilian population,' and so on. Why, good heavens, what is this conference trying to do this morning? (Loud applause.) What are you here for? I have been causing disaffection for nearly 40 years, and I have never found anything—or hardly anything—in life to be satisfied with. This is Easter time. Some twenty centuries ago there was a cross erected, and evidently the Defence of the Realm Act was enforced in that country. Evidently Jesus of Nazareth was going about causing disaffection among the civilian population.

"The Churches keep his Crucifixion as a holiday, but they have forgotten his teaching."

Referring to the Prime Minister's flippant talk of the last man, Mr. Smillie drew a picture of the last Tommy and the last Fritz:—

They are unshaven and ragged. They still carry their bit of wood and steel with them. But they have no inclination to fight. They have an inclination to talk. The shades of the Kaiser and our Prime Minister hiss at them to go on and get it finished. Fritz says: "Hullo, Tommy, are we to finish it?" "Yes," says Tommy. "But what is it all about?" "I don't know, but we have got to finish it." Fritz says: "But can't we finish it by negotiation and argument?" Tommy replies: "If we had a penny we could toss up for it." They have a cigarette together before they finish it. They are both mortally wounded. The guns are thrown away, and they clasp hands in their death agony. Fritz says: "I am going, Tommy, but what was it all about?" "I don't know," Tommy answers.

"That sounds frivolous," said Mr. Smillie, "I have no idea of being frivolous. We are all feeling too deeply for that. It is not more frivolous than the damnable talk about the last man."

Recall the situation at the turn of the spring, following the military deadlock of the winter months. The German high command had brought its eastern armies to the West, and had set

out, before American forces could be brought overseas en masse, to smash through to Paris or the Channel and end the war with a military decision in its favor.

This was the same sort of solution that had been held up, spring after spring, by one side or the other. The members of the I. L. P., no less than their fellows, were against giving in to a German military decision. That should be kept clear. They stood in silence to do honor to the men who had gone down in the battle, then on. But with the unified Allied command still to demonstrate itself and with military experts skeptical that the trans-shipment of American troops would do more than restore the equilibrium destroyed by the cave-in of the great Russian armies, they envisaged as humanly disastrous any indefinite prolongation of the struggle to reach an Allied military decision. They believed a just settlement could have been secured by negotiation earlier in the war, and they believed it could be so secured again.

They were poor military prophets as the fall months proved, —poor comforters to a sorely put government which had bungled with the diplomatic weapon,—poor help to an army fighting with its back to the wall; but they were consistent apostles of the faith that was in them, regardless of the military map and reckless of the condemnation of the great majority of British organs of opinion.

In the face of the German drive they stuck to a solution diametrically opposed to the principle that animated it—stuck to a peace without victory, brought about by popular recoil in all nations against the gruelling prospect of a peace by exhaustion. They urged it as a recourse inimical to imperialistic ambition but as a recourse consonant with democratic aims.

Their resolution read:—

This conference of the I. L. P. strongly reaffirms that a democratic and unaggressive peace secured by negotiation at the earliest possible moment, alone can save the nations from mutual destruction, ruin, and bankruptcy, and urges in the interests of civilization that no opportunity be lost of examining honestly the possibilities of world settlement; the conference sends greetings to the men and women in all countries who are working for a peoples' peace without annexations or indemnities, and with the rights of peoples, large or small, to determine their own life, and assures such men and women that the forces of reason are rapidly gathering strength among the British workers; and this conference denounces and repudiates the secret treaties to which governments and rulers have committed themselves behind the backs of their peoples, and insists that such treaties, involving imperialist conquest and territorial aggression, are the real stumbling blocks to an early and lasting peace,

and must be swept away with all governments that are bound by them.

Obviously the I. L. P. was prepared, in pressing this course at such a time, to continue its past record by taking positions on procedure radically to the left of those taken by the main body of organized labor.

Nor was the turn events had taken in line with its earlier pioneering in international and political affairs wholly to the liking of the I. L. P. executive. And with some cause.

For the labor movement to absorb the ferment the I. L. P. had engendered when the great organizations were quiescent to the issues now engaging them, was one thing. To discard the cake of yeast that had been the active principle of that ferment, was to destroy its power for leaven in the future. From an organization standpoint the net result of the expansion of the Labour Party to include workers "by hand or by brain" was to spread local labor parties, catering in competition with the I. L. P. branches to individual members. The net result of the joint British offensive was to exclude the I. L. P. as such from the Inter-Allied Conference. [Chapter VII.] True, the I. L. P. had itself stood for a policy of exclusion. From the beginning of the war, it had sought to obtain a meeting of the International Socialist Bureau, and it opposed the proposal of the Labour Party to invite to the Inter-Allied Conference, the American Federation of Labor, which it described as a "non-political body ineligible for affiliation" to the bureau. Later on the A. F. of L., from the opposite angle, similarly attempted to shunt the Labour Party (with its joint socialist and labor membership), from achieving a united front among the dominant labor and socialist formations among the Allies. The A. F. of L. wanted to keep clear of the socialists; the I. L. P., of the purely trade union bodies.

Analyzing the report made by the administrative council of the I. L. P. to the Leicester convention, the correspondent of the *Christian Commonwealth* wrote:—

Much the same argument (as to the A. F. of L.) applies to the Trades Union Congress, which, in conjunction with the Labour Party, shared responsibility for the convocation of the recent inter-Allied conference, and is coöperating in the effort to convene a general international congress. The I. L. P. protests vigorously against the assumption of authority by the joint committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party, which has acted (according to the report) "as the sole representative of labor and socialism in this country" in the effort to secure first national, then inter-Allied, and, finally, international agreement on war aims. . . .

Of what, then, do the socialists complain? Here is positive achievement—an international working-class policy carried through two stages and within sight of the third. The root of the socialist objection is that all this has been done not in the name of the Socialist International, but in the name of the organized working-class movement. The independence of the Independent Labour Party, in other words, has been ignored; the socialist organizations have been treated as part of the working-class movement. . . .

And I suppose it would continue its protest even if it were proved that the policy it advocated not only in international affairs, but in relation to the problems of social reconstruction, is essentially the policy that has been adopted by the larger organization in which it is a unit.

In a word, the I. L. P. is not prepared to play the part of a political John the Baptist. It is not prepared to see the Labour Party as the organ of political democracy in this country increase, while the I. L. P. itself diminishes. The determination to remain a separate independent party, willing indeed to work with the Labour Party to increase labor representation in Parliament, but unwilling to merge its forces in the general movement of organized labor towards the conquest of political power—a movement to which the Trades Union Congress now powerfully contributes—is written large on every page of the report.

As viewed by this correspondent, "the quarrel between the I. L. P. and the politically organized working-class movement" was for the former, "literally a fight for existence." He went on:—

Mr. Snowden's address from the chair of the conference on Monday was chiefly notable for his extraordinary declaration against a labor government, and his approval of a Lansdowne government. He said that the failure of the Labour Party during the war had made a labor government neither possible nor desirable. Whatever might be the personnel of the next government it would only be a government pledged to explore every avenue that might lead to peace. This is the Lansdowne formula, and Mr. Snowden added that personally he would not hesitate to support any government set up for that specific purpose, even if at its head there was a statesman of aristocratic and Tory tradition. Thus Mr. Snowden is not a supporter of the policy of working-class action formulated by the labor and socialist parties in the Allied countries. He was reelected as chairman of the I. L. P.

#### THE LABOR MEMBERS OF THE COALITION

This separatist movement of the extreme left, headed by Snowden, and due in part to its failure to control the main current of the labor movement, was more than matched by a separatist movement of the extreme right, due in part to an identical reason. And



the two unquestionably aggravated each other to fresh efforts at reprisal and control.

Barred out as a constituent organization from the Inter-Allied Conference and no longer secure as such even of a seat in the Labour Party executive, the energies of the I. L. P. were deflected to the constituencies where it cheerfully locked horns with the government labor following; with what result was registered at the June (1918) conference of the Labour Party. That conference was the first delegate assembly of the party since the February meeting at which it discarded its old form of a loose federation of trade unions, small socialist societies and scattered local organizations. The significance in labor politics of this change and the developments of the intervening months from February to June were thus summarized from a point of view unsympathetic to the I. L. P. by the labor correspondent of the *London Times* (June 25):—

Broadly, it may be said that, while the socialist societies (particularly the Independent Labour Party), working through the local organizations, supplied much of the driving power of the movement; the trade unions, which provided the greater part of its funds and membership, controlled its general policy through the party conferences. From time to time when the Independent Labour Party tried unduly to force the pace, the trade unions resisted, and relations were strained. But the Independent Labour Party continued to swallow its annoyance at defeats in conferences and to pursue its policy of penetration in the constituencies, and the Labour Party remained a heterogeneous confederation of discordant bodies.

The scheme of reorganization accepted last February was a step towards the creation of a homogeneous national democratic party which should derive its solid support as well as its driving power from branches or parties in all the parliamentary constituencies. . . . The I. L. P. would wish to see the process hastened, and it is doing its utmost to capture the outer organizations to compensate for its reverses in the central organization. That is how it comes about that labor members of the government who enjoy the confidence of the main body of trade unionists are finding themselves repudiated in their constituencies, and labor candidates are being put forward against government candidates in defiance of the party executive. It is to escape from the anomalous position in which the executive are thus placed that they recommend the formal breaking of the political truce. . . .

Just before the June conference, the labor members of the government united in a protest against breaking the truce and against "sniping." The debate in which Henderson, as against both Barnes (on the government right) and Smillie (as spokesman for the left) but with the acquiescence of Clynes, carried the day for a working

compromise, has been brought out in Chapter XII. While the truce was broken in such a way as to keep the labor members in the Ministry as such, they received small comfort against sniping in the constituencies. The difficulties of their position and their services to the nation were portrayed sympathetically by the *Times'* labor correspondent. He wrote (June 28):—

No one whose lot it has been to come in contact with them can fail to appreciate the way in which, to the benefit of the state, old conventions have been jettisoned, departmental minuting scrapped, and official attention immediately directed to the root of the affair in hand. In one particular respect they have revolutionized departmental practice. They have made themselves personally accessible to all who have suggestions to make or complaints to lay.

Unfortunately the labor world knows little of the inner doings of Whitehall. What it comes into direct contact with, and knows intimately, is the labor administration of the different departments representative of government. There it finds in some matters regarded by labor as of highest moment to the movement variant, and in many cases contrary, principles in operation. The responsibility is generally most undeservedly laid by labor at the doors of the representative of government. . . .

For instance, the recent government scheme for mobile labor is not, it is understood, to apply to shipyards. Thus a boilermaker or an engineer comes under a different *régime* and conditions, according as he is working in a Ministry of Munitions or an Admiralty firm. The trouble this breeds is obvious. In connection with disputes, the divergence of practice as between the Ministry of Munitions and the Admiralty is still more profound.

. . . The existence of such a state of things impairs more than can be imagined by those not in touch with industrial sentiment the status, with the authority over labor, of the labor members of the government. The latter entered the government as labor representatives in support of such uniform national labor policy as would win the war; and it is the duty of the government, as far as possible, to vindicate that position.

This was, of course, not the whole story, as shown by the resolutions offered at Nottingham (Chapter XII), demanding that the labor members of the government "come out." Not only had they to carry a vicarious load of responsibility for what were regarded as the anti-union policies of other administrative departments, but in common with most of the other older officials of the national unions, they were associated with that war-time waiving of the right to strike, of trade union regulations and of bargaining machinery which growing numbers of workers felt had stripped labor of its old protections and left it bare to war-time abuses. In the vernac-

ular of the trade union hall, labor felt it had two fights on its hands, one against Prussian autocracy and one against industrial autocracy and profiteering at home. The resulting insurgency against the old leadership was brought out in Chapter XIV on the shop stewards movement. In accepting lucrative government posts, labor officials were attacked as at best acting as buffers. The fact that Thomas had refused Cabinet posts, that Smillie had done likewise and successfully stood out against any impairment of the right to strike in the mines, lent point to these feelings.

Now beyond that, by being in the government, the labor members were inevitably associated in the common mind with the foreign policies with which the majority labor movement had broken—with the mishandling of the Russian Revolution, the tardiness to come out into the open with peace terms, the secret treaties, the refusal of passports and the like. And beyond that, unlike Barnes (who subscribed to the league of nations and the war aims memorandum), certain of them were spokesmen for bitter assaults upon the new democratic front of labor in foreign policy which engaged the rank and file; unlike Clynes, they were antagonistic to the whole procedure by which it sought to make its weight count. Their position was linked up with that of Milner, Carson, Balfour, Curzon.

Beyond that again, we must remember that throughout these months, a general election was in the offing; and the Labour Party's proposals for an unimperialistic peace and its plan for domestic reconstruction were more than academic or propaganda pronouncements. They were the platform of a political party which offered itself to the electorate as an alternative to the government in power. This was as little to the liking of those labor leaders of the extreme right, who had cast in their lot with Lloyd George, as it was to Snowden at the extreme left, who proposed to cast in his with Lansdowne on the war issue. It was common talk that the premier would try to split both labor and liberal camps and create a new party of his own.

#### HARBINGERS OF ECONOMIC WAR

But beyond all these questions of industrial relations, democratic affiliations and party tactics, the ribs of great economic interests showed through the body politic of Great Britain. The old fissures in public opinion between the free traders and the tariff reformers (protectionists) were gaping wider than ever; the old habit of aligning men by trade-interests, vertically, industry by industry, nation by nation, rather than by social classes at home coupled with fellowship abroad, was given tremendous sanction by

race enmities bred of the war. The Labour Party had sensed this in its presentment *Labour and the New Social Order*, and driven straight at it in such passages as the following on the *Britannic Alliance*:—

We desire to maintain the most intimate relations with the Labour Parties overseas. Like them, we have no sympathy with the projects of "Imperial Federation," in so far as these imply the subjection to a common Imperial Legislature wielding coercive power (including dangerous facilities for coercive imperial taxation and for enforced military service), either of the existing self-governing dominions, whose autonomy would be thereby invaded; or of the United Kingdom, whose freedom of democratic self-development would be thereby hampered; or of India and the Colonial Dependencies, which would thereby run the risk of being further exploited for the benefit of a "White Empire." We do not intend, by any such "Imperial Senate," either to bring the plutocracy of Canada and South Africa to the aid of the British aristocracy, or to enable the landlords and financiers of the Mother Country to unite in controlling the growing popular democracies overseas. The absolute autonomy of each self-governing part of the empire must be maintained intact.

And this on the League of Nations:—

As regards our relations to foreign countries, we disavow and disclaim any desire or intention to dispossess or to impoverish any other state or nation. We seek no increase of territory. We disclaim all idea of "economic war." We ourselves object to all protective customs tariffs; but we hold that each nation must be left free to do what it thinks best for its own economic development, without thought of injuring others. We believe that nations are in no way damaged by each other's economic prosperity or commercial progress but, on the contrary, that they are actually themselves mutually enriched thereby. We would therefore put an end to the old entanglements and mystifications of secret diplomacy and the formation of leagues against leagues.

It would be entirely beside the mark to discount the concern felt by some British labor men at the proposal of an inter-belligerent labor conference, which they honestly regarded as playing into the hands of the enemy; just as it would be entirely beside the mark to discount the outraged feelings of individual members of ships' crews, who refused to transport labor delegates. But it would be equally beside the mark to ignore the fact that the three-decker tariff proposed by the industrial preferentialists and the form of punishment for German naval crimes advocated by the Sailors' Union (a five-year boycott), played into the hands of interests



which would profit most by a commercial imperialism kindred, to the minds of the workers, in its economic if not in its political concepts, to the Prussianism they were fighting, and calculated to perpetuate the causes of race friction and war.

The new majority was conscious that its position might be compromised and its effective opposition routed by such interests striking through the labor leaders of the extreme right (the government group) at those of the extreme left.

Thus, we find John Hodge, Minister of Pensions, addressing a meeting at Hanley in mid-April of the North Staffordshire Branches of the Iron and Steel Trade Confederation. After a reference to the Labour Party, Hodge continued:

That is to say, if there be a Labour Party. I have my doubts. If you read the debates in the House of Commons last week you could not come to the conclusion that there was a Labour Party. One section was in one lobby and the other section in the other. One section of the Labour Party talk about "their friends in Germany." . . . Then they say that men like myself, who talk about not giving an open door to the Germans after the war, are seeking to perpetuate an economic war. We do not want to do anything of the kind, but what we ask is how, after the brutalities of the Germans towards our peaceful fishermen and our mercantile marine, after the dastardly acts with regard to the *Lusitania* and the *Belgian Prince*, after the brutal murder of Captain Fryatt, can we permit them to come into this country with their goods after the war as they did before it?

Then, looking at it from another point of view, I am not willing, as a steel worker, and you are not willing as iron and steel workers, to have furnaces idle in this country while German steel is being dumped into it. (Cheers.) There must be none of that. Not until every furnace is working and we cannot supply our own needs should we buy from other people. . . .

He was proud of the magnificent services that the iron and steel trades had rendered during the war. They had had no strikes or lockouts:

We iron and steel workers intend to play our part in reconstruction. After the war, strikes and lockouts will be catastrophes to all concerned. Reason must take the place of all other methods of settlement. I am wondering also whether, in our own interest as a confederation, the time has not come when we ought to move towards a trade union party instead of that mongrel, nondescript kind of thing that we have to-day. You cannot blend oil and water, and you cannot blend good, sound, honest trade unionists with the professed friends of Germany who are inside the party.

Thus, we find G. H. Roberts, Minister of Labour, before the Association of Trade Protection Societies in April, condemning "sniping" and those who "were continually advocating the policy of civil war within their own shores"; find him before the Eccentric Club, in response to the toast, "The Ministers of the Crown," denouncing the war aims memorandum of British and Allied labor:

So-called manifestoes were being issued without the concurrence of the labor movement and without the rank and file of that movement being consulted. He was a democrat, and he denied the right of any clique to speak in the name of the labor movement with which he was connected unless all the various elements of that movement were being consulted and a ballot taken which could give a proper decision. We were told by some people that after the war we should help enemy nations to recover as rapidly as we did ourselves. He was sufficiently old-fashioned to believe that sin ought to be punished, and that wrong ought to be expiated. The Central Empires were alone responsible for the precipitation of this horrible catastrophe, and they ought not to be allowed to emerge from this terrible struggle without paying the full penalty. He knew that what he was saying might involve him in a parting of the ways, but he was a British citizen before he was a politician, and if and when he was compelled to choose between his conception of British citizenship and his association with any political party he would say to the party—"Go hang! I am proud to be a British citizen." (Cheers.)

It had been suggested that we ought to help the enemy to recover quicker than our own nation, but he could not subscribe to any such theory. His view was "My own country first, and the British Empire in association therewith; the Allies next." We must arrange with ourselves and our Allies before we had any regard to the others. . . .

G. N. Barnes, Henderson's successor in the War Cabinet, who also responded to the toast, said he might content himself in saying "ditto" to Roberts.

Thus, we find the Australian labor premier, Hughes, in an attack more self-revealing than those of his British colleagues, in that it was directed unmistakably at the new majority, and frankly waved the bloody shirt from a flagstaff of commercial monopoly. In addressing a mass meeting of workers at Cardiff, over which Commander Sir Edward Nichol presided, he was quoted by the *London Times* (July 22) as saying:—

The loud voice of the pacifist was heard in the land; and by pacifist he meant every man, whether he was a German, a traitor, or merely a visionary or a fool, who sought to divert the nation

from the path it had sworn to follow, and deprive it of the fruits of victory—that lasting peace which it had sworn to achieve. But the pacifist made more noise than his numbers warranted. . . .

It was impossible for the workers of this or any other country to improve their working conditions unless sound economic conditions existed. And this could only be done by securing the home market and controlling the sources from which the raw material came. . . .

“Amongst those who are opposed to a sound economic policy are the pacifists,” proceeded Mr. Hughes. “I am not surprised. A sound economic policy for Britain means material loss to Germany, and the pacifists seem to have a tender regard for her interests. ‘The Paris Economic Conference resolutions,’ said Mr. Henderson, ‘must be strenuously opposed.’ That is exactly what Germany said to Russia at the point of the sword. That was how Germany expressed the triumph of Prussianism. And Mr. Henderson says exactly the same thing. He goes on:—‘British labor desires to maintain the policy of the open door.’ And Germany also desires us to maintain the policy of the open door. Emil Zimmerman says:—‘The rise of Germany is due essentially to the British policy of the open door. Without that we should be at one stroke once more the Germany of 1870.’ It is certainly curious, to say the least of it, that while England and Germany are locked in a life-and-death struggle an Englishman should agree with a German that the policy vital to the welfare of Germany should be maintained by Britain. . . . They seem to have forgotten facts that have burned themselves into our very hearts. Have they forgotten the murder of unarmed crews and passengers—men, women, and children sent without warning to their graves? Have they forgotten that hospital ships were sunk and lifeboats shelled? Do they not remember how hospitals were bombed? Have they forgotten how workers were deported from Belgium and forced to work for a miserable pittance? . . .

“There are those leaders of labor who, although they promise the workers that they will lead them into the promised land, seem by their attitude towards the war and after-the-war problems to think that labor can grow fat on a diet of wind and platitudes about internationalism. They are dealers in words rather than in deeds—men with their heads in the clouds and their feet in a bog. Labor has done gloriously in this war; it has proved its patriotism by deeds; it has fought heroically; the battlefields are red with its blood; it has endured and suffered much. Yet its courage has never flagged, its resolution never faltered. On sea and land, labor has won for itself a sure place in the heart of the nation.”

“The welfare of labor and capital,” concluded Mr. Hughes, “alike absolutely depend upon an abundant supply of raw materials for British industries and food. When the war was over there would be a fierce struggle for raw materials. Germany, under the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, had compelled Russia to supply her with

what she wanted, and in turn had forced her, at the point of the bayonet, to receive German manufactures. Mr. Henderson wanted us to continue this policy. He said it was a good one, *and that it would be very wrong to adopt the same policy as Germany herself did*. But what did the people of Britain say? He was sick of this canting humbug about internationalism. Nationalism, not internationalism, was the policy for Britain. We welcomed the civilized nations of the earth, and our dearest hope was that a firm and enduring alliance would be made between America, France and Britain. But until Germany purged herself of her iniquities, until her power to harm was crushed, we would not treat her as one of the family of nations, but as a pariah. . . ."

This same column in the *Times* reported briefly an address by Arthur Henderson the same day before a labor conference at Oldham in which he

pleaded for a real League of Nations, composed of all belligerents and neutrals. He said they wanted to create an international mind for referring disputes to boards of conciliation and arbitration. How could they talk of a family of nations and at the same time about five or ten years of revenge? Mere victory on the one side or the other would not give a settlement that was going to make the future secure for progressive democracy.

Those who said that the Labour Party desired a German settlement told a lie. He had supported the war from the beginning, and had made sacrifices. Future security lay in securing a world's peace in the interest of humanity. . . .

#### POINTS OF ATTACK UPON THE NEW MAJORITY

We have now before us some of the motivations at work on and in the extreme right of the British labor movement.

Like much else in human affairs, they were complex, ranging from an elementary exasperation at anything which distracted men's minds from the immediate business of "carrying on," to various pitches of self-interest and mistrust. These were mixed up with resurgent longings for Anglo-Saxon dominance abroad, and for a return to the *status quo ante* of the social structure at home.

If we are to assume that these motivations were consciously gathered up and directed at the overthrow of the united front of British and Allied labor, built up by the new majority, the points of attack which offered best chances for success were fairly clear. These would have been to isolate the British movement from its natural fellowship in American labor; to establish instead relationships with the latter through some "safe" trade union agency; to attempt to use the Americans to flatten out the recalcitrants at



home; to effect a swing to the right in the Labour Party itself, and, failing that, to counter it with a rival political movement on purely trade union lines; to break away the great Trades Union Congress from its alliance with the Labour Party on war aims, and to use the British union most out of touch with labor in the industrial centers (the sailors) and most intimately stirred by German atrocities, to discredit as pro-German the whole labor offensive, internally and externally, bag and baggage; engendering a popular sentiment that would lend itself to a very different world outlook and a very different home policy. Now this is mere assumption. It is to be presumed that these various moves were instigated in different quarters, and for the various motivations which have been set down. But it is clear that they all came to a head in the Derby Conference of the Trade Union Congress in September, 1918. It is altogether clear that with Pan-Germanism playing by its every excess into the hands of the opponents of the British labor majority, with the power of the British government exercised to prevent a free interplay between British and American labor, with handicaps thrown in the way of Allied labor—both by home and Prussian governments—in getting its war aims through to the German workers, with the sailors and the submarine issue to goad the righteous wrath of British men, with a great military victory reported in the midst of the Congress and rousing it to cheers and congratulatory cables, with Hughes and Gompers on the ground standing for a contrary labor leadership, they had their best chance for success. And it is clear most of all that they did not succeed. They failed utterly. The new majority held. The British workers continued to “get on with the war,” but they continued with their master distinction between the German workers and that German government which, in pre-war days, had thwarted so successfully efforts toward political and industrial freedom and might be supposed not to have loosened its grip in wartime. They determined to go on with their international procedure, like tapping at the walls of entombed miners. They stood their ground on free trade, and they disposed of the separatist movements on the extreme right in the ways which were set down in the last chapter. The American context of these things will appear in the chapters succeeding.

## CHAPTER XIX

### AMERICAN LABOR OUT OF IT

THE American Federation of Labor believes in open diplomacy, as witness the publication in the *American Federationist* of its international correspondence. Or, more correctly, an open season, for it publishes this in occasional batches. The issue for November, 1917, contained, for example, the exchanges prior to America's entry into the war—Gompers' cable of February 4, 1917, to Carl Legien, secretary of the General Commission of German Trade Unions, asking him if he could not

prevail upon the German government to avoid a break with the United States and thereby prevent universal conflict;

Legien's answer of February 11, in which he cited Germany's offer of peace negotiations and "the enemy's frankly avowed aims at destruction of Germany," claimed that no labor intervention on his part had chance of success "unless America prevails upon England to discontinue starvation war," and appealed to American labor

not to allow themselves to be catspaws of war-mongers by sailing war zone and thus contribute extending conflict;

together with Gompers' final warning of April 2:—

. . . We are all doing our level best to avert actual war and we have the right to insist that the men of labor of Germany exert their last ounce of effort to get your government to make an immediate and satisfactory avowal that shall save all from America's entrance into the universal conflict.

But, more pertinently to the matters in hand, the issues of the *American Federationist* afford a fresh background to the incidents of 1918, in their documentation of the exchanges which had been going forward for three years looking to a resumption of international relations between distinctly trade union bodies, exchanges which at times paralleled the Socialist efforts centering around Stockholm.

Before the war (Chapter III), the International Federation of Trades Unions (I. F. T. U.) (Internationaler Gewerkschaftsbund—I. G. B.) included the French Confédération Générale du Travail,

the American Federation of Labor, the General Commission of German Trade Unions, the General Federation of Trade Unions (Great Britain), and, in general, the other distinctly trade union bodies throughout Europe. [The British Trades Union Congress, however, held aloof.] Its president was Carl Legien and its offices were in Berlin. It was entirely distinct from the Socialist "International" which more cautiously had headquarters, chairman and secretary in neutral Belgium.

In 1914, the Philadelphia convention of the American Federation of Labor proposed an international labor conference to sit concurrently with the Peace congress. Favorable replies came from French, Australian and South African organizations; "from Germany came an opinion that such a plan was impracticable."

In 1915, the San Francisco convention reaffirmed this proposal. Its rejection by the British Trades Union Congress (in spite of a favorable report by its parliamentary committee) was recounted in the earlier chapter. This was at Birmingham before the "swing toward the left." The General Federation of Trade Unions of Great Britain also rejected it at the time, and thereafter stayed put on the extreme right.

In 1916, the Baltimore convention put forward the further suggestion that "all international labor organizations urge upon their national governments the justice of including in their national delegation to the World Peace Congress, when it is held, representatives of the workers of their country." The *American Federationist* of January, 1917, brought out correspondence with W. A. Appleton, secretary of the General Federation of Trades Unions of Great Britain, enthusiastically endorsing this suggestion; but it was not for 10 months, or until the December following, that the reply sent January 30, 1917, by Jouhaux of the general confederation of French workers was brought out, regretting that the American federation had "abandoned your first proposition which had been accepted by it and gave it much satisfaction." The French confederation endeavored to reopen this earlier proposal, asking Gompers to submit to his organization a proposal for an exchange of views preceding the peace congress to "enable the delegates to place themselves in accord upon the general principles they will defend."

Thus, in 1917, a proposal for an interbelligent labor conference came to the American Federation two months before America's entry into the war, from an Allied, as distinct from a German, quarter, trade union as distinct from socialist, French as distinct from British.

No reply by the American body was published in the *Federation-*

*ist*, but on March 28, 1917, a circular letter was sent out by The Schweizer Gewerkschaftsbund—Union Suisse Des Fédérations Syndicales—in “compliance with a wish of our French comrades.” They addressed the “National Centers of Trade Unions” of America, England, France, Italy, Spain and Belgium, proposing an international meeting at Berne.<sup>1</sup> In moving as neutrals, Swiss labor suggested a conference to discuss proposals put out by a conference of Allied labor held at Leeds in July, 1916; to decide on the domicile of the I. G. B., and on the continuation of the International Trade Union Correspondence. From personal information, wrote the Swiss secretary, they knew that Italian, Spanish, Austrian, Hungarian, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian and Scandinavian trade union bodies would follow their initiative, and the meeting therefore “would depend on the consent of America, England and France.” With respect to an English delegation, they thought “it most advisable to invite not only the General Federation of Trade Unions, but also the Trades Union Congress, i. e., its Parliamentary Committee, representing, as it does, the greater part of the English trade union movement,”—a significant paragraph in the light of developments. The British General Federation declined to attend; but the French confederal committee decided June 4 in favor of the conference (set for September 17, 1917) and proposed a prior meeting, also at Berne, of the central organizations of the Entente countries. Appleton cabled Gompers on July 2 that the British General Federation was still opposed<sup>2</sup> and asked the Americans to await a written report of its delegates

<sup>1</sup> They recited:

—That “the attempts made by some representatives of the Entente through the intervention of America in the year 1915 to revive the International Federation of Trade Unions by removing its headquarters to a neutral country had been without result”;

—That a “later proposition of America to hold an international trade union conference for the pronouncement of the workers’ demands at the same time and place as the general peace congress” . . . “was not found expedient either by the trade unions of the countries of the Entente, of the Central Powers, or by those of the neutral countries” as “such a proposal could only have a practical result if it were possible to work out a joint program preliminary to the international conference”;

—That a first step in this direction was made by conference of allied labor at Leeds in July, 1916, which worked out a “regular peace program,” thereafter submitted to all national centers; and decided to establish a bureau of correspondence at Paris; and

—That the subsequent effort of Legien, as president of the I. G. B., himself to call a conference at Berne in December, 1916, was abandoned, as it was “very doubtful whether the trades unions of the countries of the Entente would follow the invitation.”

<sup>2</sup> This report recounted that:

“The Americans more than a year ago suggested international conferences of workers to determine the conditions of peace. The General Fed-



(James O'Grady, Alfred Short, W. A. Appleton) just returned from Paris. This report was a characteristic diagnosis of the temper of French labor from the point of view of the extreme British right. It ascribed the action of the French confederation to "war weariness," "loss of faith in their military and political leaders," and the activity of the minority in "supporting strikes and spreading discontent." It argued that the Central Powers "would be likely to secure the votes of Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria." In line with the committee's recommendations, the annual general council of the British Federation (Gloucester, July, 1917) declined the invitation to Berne, but urged the American Federation to attend the prior conference of *Allied* trade union bodies which it had now arranged with the French C. G. T. should be held in London September 10, in order to facilitate American participation. This preliminary inter-Allied trade union meeting was apparently favored by some not as a stepping-stone, but as a stumbling block to any subsequent international gathering. Various cables from French and English sources indicated that leaders of the right looked to the presence of the A. F. of L. at this meeting as a deciding factor against Allied representation not only at Berne, but at Stockholm—which, in this mid-summer of 1917, was the prime question agitating European labor bodies and ministries alike. Henderson was quitting the British cabinet on the issue of an international labor meeting and the situation in France was almost as tense.

Gompers cabled acceptance to Appleton, the A. F. of L. designating as representatives its fraternal delegates to the annual meeting early in September (1917) of the British Trades Union Congress at Blackpool. Now, this inter-Allied trade union conference of September 10, arranged by the minor British General Federation, with its purely obstructive attitude toward the international conferences called by neutrals at Berne and Stockholm, was one in which the major British Trades Union Congress decided to have no part. The Blackpool Congress, its Parliamentary Committee fresh from another loosely hung inter-Allied meeting in August, decided rather to cast in its lot with the British Labour Party; begin at the bottom and, as told in Parts I and II, seek first to achieve unity in war aims between the two great British labor formations, industrial and political; on the solid basis of that unity seek, next, to achieve unity among the dominant Allied bodies, socialist and trade union alike; and on the solid basis of that unity, lay down on their

eration of Trade Unions regarded this as impracticable and we refused any conference with Germans while the German army occupied Belgium and Northern France."

own lines an inter-belligerent meeting while the war was on. The active participation of the French trade unionists (the C. G. T.) in this joint affirmative Socialist-labor offensive during the succeeding twelve months was at every point in contrast with the stand-off position throughout of the American (the A. F. of L.). Meanwhile the committee of neutral socialists at Stockholm recognized this taking over of the initiative on the part of British and Allied labor as an exercise of the principle of self-determination and stood ready to coöperate in the changed procedure.

### THE TWO STOCKHOLMS

The prompt and sweeping condemnation by the American Federation of Labor of the initial Stockholm project and its attitude toward subsequent international conference proposals in 1917 is clear from cables published in the *American Federationist*.

In March and April, 1917, Gompers had sent fraternal greetings to the Russian workers, acclaiming the proclamation of the provisional government and hailing their newly achieved liberty. On May 6, he sent a long cable to the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council of Deputies, at Petrograd, reaffirming that the "American government, the American people, the American labor movement are wholeheartedly with the Russian workers," denying "false reports of an American purpose and of American opinion" to the contrary and denouncing the "false pretences and underground plotting" of the German socialists to bring about "an abortive peace" through "pretended international conferences at the instigation and connivance of the Kaiser." On May 8, he sent identical cablegrams to the Confédération Générale du Travail, the French Socialists and the British Labour Party:—

As you know, the most insidious influences are at work not only to create a pro-Kaiser propaganda but also to divide and alienate from one another the nations and peoples fighting for the freedom and democracy of the world. It is your duty as it is the duty of all to impress upon all labor organizations of European neutral countries the truth about the pretended international socialist congress called to be held at Stockholm. It should be emphasized that it does not represent the working class of America, England, France or Belgium, but was called by the German socialists and certain other notoriously pro-German agitators in other countries either to bring about a Kaiser-dictated peace under the deceptive catchphrase "no annexations, no indemnities," or in the hope of deceiving the Russian socialists into betraying the great western democracies into consenting to a separate peace. It was for the above reasons

I cabled yesterday direct to the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies at Petrograd.

This was the "*Socialist Stockholm*"; arranged by the Dutch-Scandinavian committee of which the pro-Ally Branting was chairman, and the Belgian Huysmans secretary; to which American socialists, as in pre-war international party conferences, were invited but for which their delegates were refused passports by the U. S. government. Gompers identified the conference with the anti-war position taken at St. Louis in March by the American Socialist Party, which would have been represented to the exclusion of the American Federation of Labor, and his partizanship showing through his patriotism in spots, transferred wholesale to Stockholm his denunciation (as pro-German) of his long-time antagonists in the American socialist movement.

British labor was equally opposed to the Stockholm conference at the time (spring of 1917); and equally alive to the possibility that the German Majority Socialists might endeavor to exploit it to the disadvantage of the Allies. But because the Germans had exploited the American inventions of submarines and airplanes was no reason why the Allies should not employ them. As a matter of fact, the Stockholm conversations that were actually held, operated against intrigue and to the advantage of the Allied workers. Instead of acting as a cover for the German majority group, they brought out into the open the hollowness of some of its positions which were exposed by the German minority delegation. The British labor leaders recognized the good faith of the neutral group which promoted the Stockholm meetings, and also the constructive worth of its working principle as a means for free communication and common understanding, when in August, 1917, in conjunction with the French and Russian socialist and labor groups, they agreed to attend a *consultative* conference which they felt would preserve that principle and safeguard against its abuse. Good faith and principle were again recognized when, later, they set going the much more deliberate and controlled procedure of their own, in which, at its final stage, they proposed to make use of the neutral offices of three members of the Stockholm committee—Branting, Troelstra and Huysmans. American labor apparently never apprehended these radical distinctions of principle and procedure but contented itself with a simpler method of separating the sheep from the goats—as illustrated by the American exchanges with respect to a contemporaneous conference proposal.

This was the "*Trade Union Stockholm*," which (June 6, 1917) sent a message signed not only by Oudegeest (Holland), and Lind-

quist (Sweden), but by Legien, Bauer and Sassenbach (Germany), Hueber (Austria), Jasza (Hungary) and Sakaroff (Bulgaria), as well as by representatives from Denmark, Norway and Finland, inviting the American Federation to an adjourned meeting. They received a non-committal cable in reply asking what international trade union centers were to be invited. The reader cannot escape the impression that the presence of socialists rather than of Germans in such an international gathering was Gompers' reliable touchstone! He cabled Appleton that it was impossible for him to answer the invitation definitely at once; meanwhile he would be pleased to have word from him. The adverse position of the British Federation was learned, and the executive council of the A. F. of L. on June 27 in turn rejected the trade union Stockholm project "as premature and untimely"; it could "lead to no good purpose."<sup>1</sup>

None the less, in May, James Duncan, first vice-president of the American Federation of Labor, had carried a letter of greeting from American labor to the "workers and people" of Russia, as a member of the Root Mission, and on June 13, Gompers cabled him:—

Cablegrams from Petrograd published in American newspapers of June 11 contain information that a conference has been called at Petrograd to consider advisability of calling a congress of socialistic bodies and federations of trade unions of the world. The credential issued to you by Executive Council, American Federation of Labor, authorizes you to participate in such conference, and if invited, you are advised to accept and participate. The American Federation of Labor is the most democratically organized and controlled labor movement in the world, and of course you will insist upon acceptance of fundamental principles of democracy for every country; also the necessity for all the peoples of each country, large and small, to live their own lives and work out their own destiny. The cause for which America entered the war was to safeguard these principles, and much as we desire peace, no false notions should prevail. The world cannot longer endure half autocracy and half democracy; either the one or the other will prevail, and American labor is in the fight for the destruction of autocracy and for the victorious universal establishment and maintenance of democracy.

In July (1917) the cables to America fairly hummed with invitations—from Huysmans at Stockholm, inviting the A. F. of L.

<sup>1</sup> Human nature cropped out in the concluding paragraph of Gompers' reply to Lindquist:

"If an international trade union conference is to be held, it should be at a more opportune time than the present or the immediate future, and in any event the proposals of the American Federation of Labor for international conference should receive further and more sympathetic consideration. Shall be glad to continue correspondence."



to the postponed international conference called by the socialist neutrals—in regard to which Gompers wanted more information; from Jouhaux at Paris (July 23), asking his opinion on the summoning of “all organized factions by the Russian Soviet,”—which Gompers held could not “at this time or in the near future be productive of good”; from Appleton, at London, urging the A. F. of L. to attend the inter-Allied trade union conference he had arranged with the French C. G. T. for September 10 in London,—which, as we have noted, Gompers accepted; from Henderson, at London (July 26), inviting delegates to an Inter-Allied and Socialist Conference of August 8—to which Gompers cabled regrets as the time was too short; and from Henderson in reply, setting the dates over to August 28 and 29. Nor were dates the only thing at issue.<sup>1</sup> Clearly there was a jurisdictional dispute on, such as has been the order of business in labor conventions since the beginning of time, but on an international scale worthy of such past masters as Gompers and Henderson. Gompers wanted to bar out the American Socialists and bring in the British General Federation. Henderson replied that they would not “exclude American Socialist Party” and “that the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress represented British organized labor.” As a matter of fact, Henderson’s August (1917), conference did not get anywhere [Chapter II], Apple-

<sup>1</sup>Gompers’ reply read:

“It is possible American Federation of Labor delegates can reach London August 28, and if entering into conference cannot submit to representation of any other body claiming to represent United States Workers. American Trade Union movement has three and one-half million members and cannot divide responsibility with any other body claiming to represent American labor movement.”

In the meantime Appleton had cabled:

“General Federation of Trade Unions not consulted concerning Labour Party Conference. Russian delegates made no communication officially or unofficially to Jouhaux or myself. *Management committee still opposed to conference with enemy-delegates unless conference is preceded by German government’s undertaking to evacuate France and Belgium and make reparation.*”

Gompers replied to Appleton:

“Your cablegram received. Have also received cablegram from Henderson strongly urging our federation delegates to attend conference 28, 29. I have sent him following cable reply:

“‘Appleton informs me neither British General Federation Trade Unions of Jouhaux of Confédération Générale du Travail, France, have been consulted in calling or preparing for or participating in the conference your party has called. How can American Federation of Labor regard such a conference as representing labor?

“‘Our delegates will attend London conference labor representatives of Allied countries beginning September 10. Delegates are John Golden, James Lord.’”

ton's September (1917) conference apparently died aborning; and it was a full year before the American Federation of Labor and the two great British bodies sat in session together. Then each dominant group, apparently by tacit agreement and against the manoeuvring of the British right on the one hand, and the French left, on the other, was left master in its own house. Neither the American Socialists nor the British Federation as such were among those present!

But this American-Allied conference (London, September, 1918; Chapter XXII) was a reconvened meeting of that Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference (London, February, 1918, Chapter VIII) which the British had built up in the teeth of bitter resistance and prejudice when, at Blackpool, they determined to make a fresh start, distinct on the one hand from the efforts to secure an international socialist conference along pre-war lines at Stockholm and distinct, on the other hand, from the efforts to secure an international trade union conference along pre-war lines at Berne. It was this new front of Allied labor, closed ranks of socialists and trade unionists alike, resistant to German militarism and insistent on outflanking it with an offensive of democratic ideas, which, throughout the intervening twelve months, American labor was "out of."

#### THE BREAK ON PROCEDURE

Throughout this period (September, 1917—September, 1918) the British leaders believed they were in close step with President Wilson in their war aims and cited the common ground covered by their memorandum of December 27, 1917, and his fourteen points of January 8, 1918. At a time when the American president was taking the lead in a freer and more democratic statesmanship, American labor hung back in throwing its weight alongside Allied labor in the new alignment of the forces for democracy among the Allied nations.

True, at its Buffalo convention in November, 1917, the American Federation of Labor had adopted the following formulation of peace terms:—

1. The combination of the free peoples of the world in a common covenant for genuine and practical coöperation to secure justice and therefore peace in relations between nations.
2. Governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed.
3. No political or economic restrictions meant to benefit some nations and to cripple or embarrass others.

4. No indemnities or reprisals based upon vindictive purposes or deliberate desire to injure, but to right manifest wrongs.

5. Recognition of the rights of small nations and of the principle, "No people must be forced under sovereignty under which it does not wish to live."

6. No territorial changes or adjustment of power except in furtherance of the welfare of the peoples affected and in furtherance of world peace.

In addition to these basic principles, which are based upon declarations of our President of these United States, there should be incorporated in the treaty that shall constitute the guide of nations in the new period and conditions into which we enter at the close of the war the following declarations fundamental to the best interests of all nations and of vital importance to wage-earners:

1. No article or commodity shall be shipped or delivered in international commerce in the production of which children under the age of 16 have been employed or permitted to work.

2. It shall be declared that the basic workday in industry and commerce shall not exceed eight hours.

3. Involuntary servitude shall not exist except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.

4. Establishment of trial by jury.

Early in the new year (1918), British labor sent out its invitations to the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London in February. On the receipt of such an invitation, the executive council of the A. F. of L. drew up a statement on "Labor's War Aims" which contained this paragraph:—

The common people everywhere are hungry for wider opportunities to live. They have shown their willingness to spend or be spent for an ideal. They are in this war for ideals. Those ideals are best expressed by their chosen representative in a message delivered to the Congress of the United States January 8, setting forth the program of the world's peace. President Wilson's statement of war aims has been unreservedly endorsed by British organized labor. It is in absolute harmony with the fundamentals endorsed by the Buffalo convention of the American Federation of Labor.

But this statement of the Executive Council (published in the March *Federationist*) went outside the formulation of war aims at the Buffalo convention of the A. F. of L. in November, and took a position on the question of procedure. This position was adverse to that adopted the same month (February) by Allied labor at London: it discarded the weapon of labor diplomacy. To quote:—

We regret that circumstances make impossible continuous close personal relations between the workers of America and those of

the allied countries, and that we cannot have representation in the Inter-Allied Labour Conference about to convene in London.

Their cause and purpose are our cause and purpose. We cannot meet with representatives of those who are aligned against us in this world war for freedom, but we hope they will sweep away the barriers which they have raised between us. Freedom and the downfall of autocracy must come in Middle Europe.

We doubly welcome the change if it come through the workers of those countries. . . .

Just there was the crux of the whole British labor procedure—to provoke that change by massing and transmitting evidences of unselfish intentions, coupled with assurances of fair play, should the German workers assert themselves toward the same ends. Shut off themselves for four years from free communication, the British workers did not have to be told how ignorance befriended reaction. Nationalists themselves, they did not have to be told how lack of such assurances must put a damper on political uprising even against an autocracy. These things played into the hands of the Junkers, no less than piling up recriminations and threats which drove a people back upon its instinct for self-defense. The position taken by the American Federation of Labor was of a sort to stall what to the British workers seemed the best chance for getting the contrary message through. They might well have quoted a passage from President Wilson's address at the Buffalo convention:—"A settlement is never impossible when both sides want to do the square and right thing." They wanted to do the square and right thing. But did the German workers know this? They proposed to tell them. Did the German workers want to do the square and right thing? They did not know. And they proposed to find out. The President was talking of labor conflicts, but it was after all their experience in labor conflicts which they were applying to the great war. "Moreover," the President went on,

a settlement is always hard to avoid when the parties can be brought face to face. I can differ from a man much more radically when he is not in the room than I can when he is in the room, because then the awkward thing is he can come back at me and answer what I say. It is always dangerous for a man to have the floor entirely to himself. Therefore, we must insist in every instance that the parties come into each other's presence and there discuss the issues between them and not separately in places which have no communication with each other.

In the invitation to the American Federation to be represented <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The American Socialist Party was specifically excluded from this invitation, to meet the position taken by the A. F. of L.



at the Inter-Allied Conference in London on February 20, 1918, which Henderson mailed on January 16, he made it clear that not only would the British labor war aims be up for consideration together with any amendments sent in on behalf of other Allied participants, but also the "very important question as to whether the time has arrived when we should hold an international conference." "Even if your federation," wrote Henderson, "does not quite agree with the two committees responsible for organizing the Inter-Allied Conference, it would be desirable that your representatives, and especially yourself, were present to put the American point of view." The question was still open. The favorable attitude toward it of the Allied labor and socialist bodies had been made clear, however, by the fraternal delegates at Nottingham.

Gompers' reply was not cabled until February 18 (1918). It follows:—

Your January 16 letter reached me late Saturday, February 9, and brought to attention Executive Council, American Federation of Labor, in session on eleventh. We regret that circumstances make impossible to be represented in the Inter-Allied Conference, London, February 20.

Executive Council in declaration unanimously declared, "We can not meet the representatives of those who are aligned against us in this world war for freedom but we hope they will sweep away the barriers which they have raised between us."

All should be advised that any one presuming to represent labor of America in your conference is simply self-constituted and unrepresentative.

We hope shortly to send delegations of representative workers American labor movement to England and France.

Nothing could have better illustrated the baffling difficulties in the way of long distance communication between labor bodies in war time, than this very exchange between British and American groups.

Gompers has stoutly denied that the A. F. of L. ever refused to take part in this London meeting. There is no reason to question his statement, although at Nottingham in mid-January it was current talk that the American Federation of Labor would not take part. He has as stoutly maintained that shortness of notice alone prevented its doing so. A phrase in the first paragraph of Henderson's letter of January 16 to the effect that he was "sending herewith particulars" raises the presumption of an earlier message; and a report of the British Labour Party, published the June following, stated that a cable was actually sent on January 10, a full month prior to the date on which the A. F. of L. took action. The text of

this cable was not printed in the *Federationist*. Gompers did not specifically state that the written invitation was the first word to reach him. But the whole moral force of his contention that the A. F. of L. was not represented because of lack of time rests on the implication that such a cable was never received.

The wording of his reply of February 18 to Henderson's written invitation (without Henderson's inquiry at hand to show what the quotation from the Executive Council applied to) was not proof against a construction which might create misgivings in the public mind as to the make-up and patriotism of the Inter-Allied Labour Conference. But somebody did not leave this to chance. As published in the British press the day the conference opened, the following sentence was apparently part of Gompers' message:—

American labor believes German influences inspired the London conference and until this is disproved will avoid the conference.

Nothing could have been better timed than this postponed and altered cablegram to discredit the whole meeting at the very outset and to provoke discord among its members. But with the original reply in their hands the publicity committee of the conference gave the text out as received by them, together with a copy of the following cable:—

"Gompers,

"American Federation of Labor,

"Washington.

"Press in this country circulating statement, your alleged authority, that American labor believes German influences inspire the London conference. Nothing of this appears in your telegram to us. We feel sure you will resent gross falsification your message. Apparently part of campaign malicious misrepresentation on part enemies of labor. Trust you will dissociate your federation from statement which is wholly untrue."

The *Federationist* stated (April) that the A. F. of L. cablegram was given out in Washington the day it was sent, and was cabled abroad by "some representative of the press in New York." There is nothing to indicate that the A. F. of L. endeavored to probe as to which side of the water the sentence was interpolated in a way which practically charged, in the name of American labor, that the conference leaders were traitors or German tools. Gompers, "owing to important official engagements which necessitated absence from Washington and to official duties that could not be deferred," allowed them to simmer from February 25 to March 13 before cabling a disclaimer of the sentence. Even then, he stopped short with

denying responsibility for the "garbled" text. While he took pains to reiterate his own unblemished position against meeting enemy labor, he was non-committal as to the libel for which his cablegram had served as a carrier.

## CHAPTER XX

### LABOR IN LEADING STRINGS

IN the succeeding months every effort of the British labor majority to send spokesmen to America to overcome isolation and distance and the misapprehensions bred of them, was successfully balked. Meanwhile, the extreme right of the British labor movement was not so circumscribed, nor was the American Federation of Labor.

While the two great British labor bodies were drawing Allied labor into mutual conference in London (February, 1918, the government labor group had posted off to the United States a delegation of its own way of thinking. Seven days before the Labour Party executive sent its cabled invitation to America, the non-receipt of which apparently prevented A. F. of L. participation in the London conference, Barnes of the War Cabinet sent this cable:—

“Gompers,

“Afel, Washington.

“Letters received. Would you invite small delegation of labor men from here to come over and tour U. S. A.? We think it would be useful. I could send you about three of our best men. Best wishes. Happy New Year.”

To which Gompers replied, stipulating that they should be “true British trade unionists,” and suggesting that they come in February (1918) so as to take part in Labour’s Loyalty Campaign.

“Each of the men was specially fitted to interpret British thought and purpose in regard to war and labor matters,” said the *American Federationist* at the close of their tour. But, however ably and conscientiously they may have spoken for their unions or their government—or, for that matter, for the great mass of British labor so far as the prosecution of the war went,—they were not only out of touch with, but out of joint with, those great foreign and domestic policies which now fired the British labor movement; rather, they were likely to short-circuit any understanding of these policies on this side of the water. They might speak for the British General Federation of Trade Unions whose president (Apleton) was one of the delegates, but his penchant for speaking for



the whole labor movement (not at all to its liking) had been not the least of the causes why the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party executive had dropped the Federation from the joint board in 1917. They might speak for the British Workers' League, of which Victor Fisher was the moving spirit, but which had been roundly denounced at the Nottingham meeting of the Labour Party. They had been selected without reference to, or consultation with, the two great labor bodies which together embrace over four-fifths of the organized workers of Great Britain.

The publication of these facts while the delegates were on tour let the cat out of the bag and brought down Gompers' wrath at a meeting on March 6, of the National Civic Federation of which he is vice-president. This body dates back to the period of corporate expansion when industries were being organized on a national scale, and its initiation by Ralph M. Easley represented an effort to build up better relations among the national organizations of employers, employees and the public. Compared with the anti-union, public-be-damned policy of the National Association of Manufacturers, it registered a notable advance toward understanding and coöperation, and its work in promoting negotiation, conciliation and arbitration is a progressive chapter in American industrial history. For many years this was carried on in the competent hands of John Mitchell, until the United Mine Workers of America demanded his withdrawal on the grounds of other of the Federation's activities. For the activities of its executive staff were not confined to the affirmative policy of building up better relations between capital and labor but were concerned also with cementing their partnership in the existing order to the defeat of any radical efforts to modify it. They long ago supplied lists of trade union and other speakers calculated to combat the propaganda of socialism. With the outbreak of the great war, they capitalized to the full the opportunity to identify socialism as the sinister offspring of Kaiserism. Their habit has been, also, to lump with socialism, practical steps in the direction of social control, a habit which, linked, perhaps, with the dual elements in the membership of the Civic Federation, has resulted in an oblique opposition to reforms in the industrial field. The National Child Labor Committee encountered them in its campaigns for protective legislation against Southern cotton mill abuses, the American Association for Labor Legislation when it crossed swords with the employers' liability insurance companies over the creation of public compensation funds, the Russell Sage Foundation and the National Consumers League in their efforts to improve department store conditions and the New York State Factory Inves-

tigation Commission in its findings for minimum wage legislation. At the present time, a subsidiary of the Federation is apparently engaged in a propaganda to combat compulsory sickness insurance as a German invention. The British Labour Party's reconstruction program was a snort in the nostrils of such obstructionists, and its proposals for an inter-belligerent conference while the war was on gave them fire and brimstone to breathe.

In advance of this New York meeting of March 6, Easley, as chairman of the board of the Civic Federation, sent out the following letter:—

There has been observable within the last few weeks the rapid development of a serious break, in this country as well as in Europe, between a combination of the Pacifist, Socialist, Bolshevik and other pro-German forces, on the one hand, and, on the other, the organized labor movement (represented in this country by the American Federation of Labor and the Railway Brotherhoods) and the other elements in our national life that stand for continuing the war until a just and permanent peace can be secured.

The offensive has been taken by the Pacifists and Socialists in Europe and they are now arranging to send to this country a delegation to promote a program which practically means the securing of an immediate German peace. This is accomplished by the calling of an international labor and socialist conference at Stockholm or in Switzerland, where an overwhelming majority of the delegates, selected on the Socialist Party and Socialist Union membership basis, would be Germans or pro-Germans, thus enabling the Germans to dominate every feature of the program.

As a part of the program of the Pacifist-Socialists, who have arranged to send a delegation here to initiate the propaganda in this country, a lure is held out to labor in the form of a proposed "after the war industrial program," which, when stripped of all unnecessary verbiage, means nothing more nor less than Karl Marx socialism, which has been repudiated by the labor organizations of the United States. As a prelude, or shall we say "barrage," they have already inaugurated from England an attack on the American Federation of Labor and especially on Mr. Gompers, as well as on British labor delegates now in this country who represent the trade union movement in Great Britain in the same manner as the American Federation of Labor and the Railway Brotherhoods represent organized labor here, the trade union movement being the only one that has ever accomplished anything in the interest of labor in this or any other country. These assailed British delegates are the gentlemen who will be the guests of the National Civic Federation at luncheon on Saturday.

The president of the A. F. of L., if we are to believe an inspired cable to the London *Times*, "traveled to New York expressly to de-

nounce the critics of his labor co-partners from Great Britain." The press made much of a remark attributed to him that "to talk peace now was to play the German game," but he avoided any direct references to the British labor offensive. The following speaker, with whom he compared notes, practised no such decorum.

This was William English Walling, ten years before an exponent of syndicalism, in rebellion against the existing rigid political actionist regime in the Socialist Party, a proponent of direct action and the I. W. W. and a defender of working class morality which would treat a labor contract as "a scrap of paper." He quoted reports of the speeches at Nottingham in a way to identify the British-Allied movement with the Bolsheviki and with the extreme left in France and Italy. To do this it was necessary to associate the responsible leadership of the London conference with either insincerity or feebleness and wholly to ignore the first edge of the British labor blade—unremitting resistance to Prussian militarism in the field. Henderson was the "political boss" of the "British laborite pacifists." Walling read into his "moral ultimatum to the governments from an organized democracy," the Zimmerwaldian doctrine of an immediate general strike to end the war. Vandervelde had been anxious to have the American Federation of Labor present at the London meeting, believing that it would sustain him in his position that prior to sitting in conference with labor bodies from the Central Empires, Allied labor should demand of them explicit subscription to the conditions of a democratic peace, and guarantees that "in their turn they are also resolved to proceed not to words but to acts for this democratic peace against the Kaiser, and not for the Kaiser against a democratic peace." He had carried the conference with him in this conservative course, but Walling could see no other interpretation to his words than that "even Vandervelde is ready to pledge a revolution in France and England to accompany a revolution in Germany." "Every socialist at the Allied conference," said Walling, "knew that the only possible purpose of an international socialist meeting would be . . . to compromise with the Germans." Vandervelde, that March morning in this fourth year of the war, to which he had given himself unstintedly, was probably in some bomb-racked town in the little strip of free Belgium which stretched from Nieuport to Ypres, or visiting soldiers in the swampy Belgian trench line who, to keep from freezing, had had to keep moving during the bitter hours of the night in their unheated barns. Throughout the winter, he had contrived, as Minister of Intendance and with the help of the American Red Cross, better shelters, rest rooms, kitchens and the like to help make them fit until spring broke and with it the expected German drive. Against this they more than proved their

mettle in spite of canards that they were defeatists: directed not only at Belgian labor but at the Belgian troops. This was the type of socialist and labor leader who, from three thousand miles away, was pictured as weakly yielding to a conference project which would throw the war at expense of the democratic principles the Allied workers had unanimously made their own for war or for peace.

It was, perhaps, significant, that Crawford Vaughan, ex-premier of South Australia and a colleague of Hughes', was also present at this American meeting.

The report of the meeting, as published in the New York press, and as cabled to London, was to the discredit of Henderson and his following and to the entire rehabilitation of Appleton and the rest of the government labor delegation who looked on. The following from the London *Daily News* (February 16) is a sufficient commentary of their real status among British liberals at home:—

We have been anything but happy in our choice of emissaries to America in the past three years. At the present time there is a party of British trade unionists in America. They were selected by the war cabinet, not by the labor movement in this country, and they are in point of fact utterly unrepresentative of the solid mass of British labor on so vital a question as the holding of an international conference. Mr. Appleton's attitude, for example, is diametrically opposed to the decision of the four million members represented by the Trades Union Congress. It is well that that should be recognized in America, for we cannot allow differences of purpose to be assumed where, in fact, they do not exist. And if there is one prediction that can be made with more confidence than another of the trend of the growing volume of democratic thought in England, it is that it will flow with ever increasing momentum down the channels cut by the authorized exponents of the policy of America. Mr. Wilson's League of Nations is the beacon hope of the democracy of Great Britain. His resolve that the war shall remain a war of liberation and not of aggrandizement is their resolve. They, like him, demand that the military weapon shall, continuously, be reinforced by the political. So far as their spokesmen convey any other impression, they convey a false impression.

On their return to England, the British delegation was entertained at dinner (May 30) by the Industrial League, organized along the lines of the National Civic Federation, at which G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour, received "the delegates as the most trusted in the (British labor) movement and the most devoted to its aims"; and announced that the

future of the labor movement abided with the people who were represented there that night. The past was dead. The old cries,



the old shibboleths, had gone never more to be resuscitated. They could not allow mere sentimentalism to guide them. His purpose was work and wages for his own people. First of all, he was going to be concerned with the prosperity of his own country. It was too late to discriminate between one class and another in Germany.

In response, Charles Duncan, one of the delegates, said:—

Of all the men he had met in the trade-union movement he placed Samuel Gompers at the top—a long way ahead of the rest. He agreed with the attitude and policy displayed by the American Federation of Labor in regard to the socialist movement in the United States. The downfall of the labor movement in this country would be its association with the socialist movement.

Appleton claimed that the delegation to America had represented “99½ per cent of the people of this country,” and in an interview railed at the “so-called intellectuals claiming to be labor,” who build—

airy structures of rhetorical formulæ which look very impressive if you don't examine them too closely and if you can forget, as Clemenceau says, that “the Germans are at Noyon.” Whether they like it or not, they are playing the German game. . . .

#### THE AMERICAN LECTURE TRIP

This interview was later circulated as a press sheet in the United States by the American Alliance of Labor and Democracy, of which Gompers is president, and which in March announced the personnel of a labor delegation to visit England as representative of the American Federation of Labor. Chester Wright, formerly editor of the *Socialist Call*, who went as secretary, was quoted in the “formal announcement” published in the *New York Tribune* (March 29), as follows:—

The delegation will deal with the General Federation of Trade Unions as the representative labor body of Great Britain. It will not mix in the politics or other internal affairs of either England or France. It has under its credentials the right to confer with labor representatives of the Allied countries, but it will have nothing to do with the representatives of enemy countries.

On the matter of dealing with representatives of the enemy, it will stand on the specific declaration of the American Federation of Labor against dealing or truckling with representatives of the enemy while the war is on.

Generally it will investigate conditions and report to the convention of the American Federation of Labor at its annual convention in St. Paul on June 10, 1918.

Their visit was something very different from a free interplay between organized labor here and abroad (which was clearly desirable and consonant with our ideas of open democracy), or even with a friendly visit on its own by an American labor mission (which was clearly the impression created by the announcements in the United States). They were "bona fide" trade unionists selected and accredited as an official delegation by the American Federation. They went, however, if we are to believe Wright, to deal with a minor labor faction reflecting the views of the government labor group of the extreme right, and to deal with it mistakenly "as the representative labor body of Great Britain." And they went at the expense of the propaganda office of the British government, at a time when the same elements in the government were successfully stopping the truly representative British labor bodies from sending any spokesmen whatever to America, who might defend them from outrageous misrepresentation or lay the basis for a better understanding. For not only was the delegation held up which was appointed by the Inter-Allied Labour Conference in February to go to America "to confer with the forces of democracy," but also the fraternal delegates appointed by the British Trades Union Congress to attend the A. F. of L. convention in June.

This is not the place to follow the round of the American labor delegation in England before they left for France—their stay at Warwick Castle, their dinner at the House of Commons, their banquet at Whitehall, their reception by royalty, their visit to battle cruisers in the Firth of Forth, and their tours through industrial centers.

In their conferences with the British labor leaders some of them showed that they still labored under the illusion that the latter, who had been in the fight for four years, were ready to accept peace terms dictated by Germany and needed homilies on patriotism by Americans who had been in scarcely one; that Allied labor was still talking in terms of the old Socialist International; and that the British wanted to enter into negotiations of a binding character—get up from the table with a signed document which they might hand over to their governments with a "there you are—we have settled it for you"—incidents, all, which indicated the sort of misrepresentations on which they had been fed up. Thomas said to them bluntly that "whatever they might have been told on the other side, and notwithstanding any suggestion they might have received on this side, they must realize that the politically and industrially organized workers of Great Britain spoke through two national committees and through no other bodies."

Perhaps the best interpretation of the A. F. of L. position was put

by James Wilson [chairman] at Whitehall, when he said (April 28, 1918):

The American labor movement, on whose behalf my colleagues and myself are authorized to speak, declares most emphatically that it will not agree to a peace conference with the enemies of civilization, irrespective of what cloak they wear, until Prussian militarism has withdrawn within its own boundaries;<sup>1</sup> and then not until they have, through proper representations, proved to our satisfaction that they recognize the right of the peoples of civilized nations to determine for themselves what shall be their standard. Unless a reconstruction soon comes from the German workers within that country, it is now plain that an opportunity to uproot the agencies of force will only come when democracy has defeated autocracy in the military field, and won the right to reconstruct relations between nations and men. Spontaneous uprisings in Germany in protest against the militarist Government have shown that the German government is still stronger than the movement for German emancipation. German freedom is ultimately the problem of the German people, but the defeat of Prussian autocracy in the field will bring an opportunity for German liberty at home. That the American government, indeed the American people, are of this opinion is proved by the preparations they are making to coördinate all their means with the Allied nations for the defeat of the Central Powers.

There again was the old crux of the matter. British labor was for breasting Prussian autocracy in the field; but they saw no reason, while doing so, to throw away any chance to loosen any forces for democracy behind the German front and win them as new allies for a democratic peace. The fact that Prussian militarism was still stronger than the movement for German emancipation was a reason, as they saw it, for giving help to the emancipators; not for refusing it. In the joint meetings between the delegates of the A. F. of L., the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, the Executive of the Labour Party, and members of the Parliamentary Party, Henderson said that their desire to meet the Americans was due to the fact that owing to shortness of notice the latter had been unable to send delegates to the February meeting. While the conference regretted their absence, it had felt bound to go on with its work and reached two fundamental decisions: (1) in regard to an agreement on war aims, and (2) as to the method of accomplishing these aims. He pointed out that, with respect to the first, there was no difference in principle from the A. F. of L. war

<sup>1</sup> This position should be compared with that taken by Appleton of the British General Federation in his messages to Gompers (pages 232, 237). The A. F. of L. now echoed what the British Federation had said in turning down its own earlier overtures.

aims formulated in the statement endorsed by the Buffalo Convention of 1917. He thought it would be a great step forward if the delegates could recommend that the two were so much in harmony that the A. F. of L. should publicly associate itself with the inter-Allied proposals.

On the question of method, the memorandum laid down two proposals: (a) of a concurrent or simultaneous conference of workers' representatives while the official peace congress met, (b) of a preliminary or intermediate international conference. The first proposal came originally from the A. F. of L. On that there was agreement. The issue narrowed down to the question of a preliminary conference. While objecting to anything in the nature of a binding conference, he hoped the Americans would not object to conversations with the German representatives.

The Americans took to heart the principle of a consultative conference to the extent of applying it to these meetings. Their purpose was not to reach agreement, but only to converse and understand each other! They had no power to enter into negotiations but only to report back. From the British point of view, the most hopeful statement made was that of one American delegate to the effect that America had not been through what Britons had suffered and had not as yet made the same sacrifices. If reasons were advanced, or new light thrown upon the situation, if, after the experience of some eighteen months of war, some other position should be taken up, if it could be shown that as far as labor was concerned some way of bringing down the military machine had been found, the A. F. of L. would not be found wanting.

For the most part the visitors had a penchant for opening off with speeches declaring America's inflexible determination to get on with the war to "beat the Hun"—speeches which in the words of one British committeeman, "had been heard a thousand times on both sides of the Atlantic and no question of policy or principle arose from them."

While this was true in the conferences, and while the visitors lapsed more than once into that "weak language" of the American headline writers from which the President dissociated himself in his Baltimore address, their speeches on public occasions, in so far as they were affirmative testimony as to American effort, served a very real purpose. We must remember that this was in April and May, with the German offensive at its height, and with the casualty lists lengthening and lengthening in the British press. And it was heartening for the British public to be told in ringing utterances, by representatives of organized labor in the New World, that the plain people of America were with them in the struggle, that while



250,000 men were coming overseas a month, uncounted others were putting their backs into the production of fuel and ships and munitions, that all America was in, and would be with them till the Prussian thrust was broken, and liberty safe. That, in common with all England, the British workers were glad to hear, and could match with fresh exertions in those months of stress from Land's End to John o'Groats; but they matched also the new spirit of democracy in which the American President had broken through the encrusted statecraft of the Allied powers—matched it with their own collective effort toward the same end. The issue of the new open diplomacy of labor still stood, and on that they were baffled by the association of American labor with the very forces which for three years of war had clung to a course contrary to their procedure, and contrary to that of the American President. The American delegates, for example, were to be found going from a reception at 10 Downing Street to the House of Commons, where they were guests of the British General Federation and where Barnes of the War Cabinet, Hodge of the Ministry of Pensions, Havelock Wilson of the Sailors' Union, O'Grady and the rest of the government labor group of the extreme right were much in evidence; they were to be found speaking at mass meetings under the National War Aims Committee with Appleton presiding, and to be found at a dinner of the Industrial League with Roberts in the chair. They iterated and reiterated their position "to talk no peace until victory had been achieved," that the only negotiations they could have with the Germans were the negotiations of armed men, munitions and ships, and that they

had listened to reasons why conferences of an inter-Allied character were asked for, and the members of the Mission were returning to America more determined than ever that the course that had been pursued by the labor movement there was the only proper course to pursue in the struggle in which the world was engaged.

—all of which was of a sort to undermine the British majority leaders and to put it in the position of truckling to Germany. In the industrial districts the visiting delegates did not confine themselves to exhibiting American devotion, but contrived a "holier-than-thou" attitude. One of them addressed the shop stewards as follows:

We've heard a lot about you chaps, and we know of some of your difficulties; but your job to-day is to beat the Hun first and to settle your working differences afterwards.

And another American delegate addressed a group of Clyde workers, saying:

How, in the name of God, can those who love democracy think of conferring with Germans who have committed such horrible outrages against innocent women and children?

The *Christian Commonwealth* is an organ of modern radical nonconformity in Great Britain. It was instrumental in calling the American preacher, Fort Newton, to the City Temple of London. The labor comment of the *Christian Commonwealth* is considered well informed and moderate. A. E. Zimmern, of the Workers' Educational Association, recommends it as perhaps the safest guide of any in England to the main body of labor opinion.

The *Christian Commonwealth* said of the American labor delegation after the gatherings in the House of Commons:

Good fellowship and the traditions of hospitality did not prevent the visitors hearing, apparently for the first time, and to their own manifest surprise, that British labor has had a longer experience of war than the American workers and is in a position to give rather than to take lessons from American labor on the duties of the working-class movement in war time. . . .

It must be admitted that the circumstances attending the visit of the American labor delegates gave color to the suspicion that American labor had conceived a totally wrong impression of the nature of the democratic peace policy to which it was invited to lend its support. The allied deputation which was to have visited America to explain this policy was postponed in consequence of the announcement that a delegation had been appointed by the American Federation of Labor to discuss the situation with representatives of labor on this side of the Atlantic. But the difficulties encountered by the allied deputation in arranging to go to America, contrasted with the celerity of the arrangements made to facilitate the visit of the American delegation, traveling under government auspices, give the latter mission an equivocal appearance. There seemed to be more anxiety to enable British labor to hear what the Americans had to say than to enable American labor to hear what the allied working-class leaders had to say in justification of the policy unanimously adopted at the recent joint conference.

In view of the fact that the present American delegation has no power to commit the American Federation of Labor to any new policy on war aims, it is not surprising if the visit is regarded here as delaying the policy of international conciliation.

British labor had shown its readiness to meet American labor half way. Henderson had stated that the next move was "up to" German labor, that German labor must show it was trying to shake loose from the military power. On April 17 he said:

We want to make it clear that the grasping policy and lust for world domination of their government are the greatest obstacles to

world peace; but as we refused to support any imperialistic designs, so must they.

On April 26 he said:

The working-class parties in the Allied countries believe, in the words of the War Aims Memorandum, that, whoever wins, the peoples will have lost unless an international system is established which will prevent war.

Earlier in this chapter we endeavored to set down the antithesis of British and American labor procedure in relation to the emancipation of the German working classes. Here, at risk of once more covering ground that was dealt with earlier in this book, let us set down that antithesis in relation to domestic opinion.

The point as British labor saw it was this: The Allies must down Prussian militarism. They must establish a democratic peace. They must safeguard that peace by the instrument of a league of nations. The only way to effect these aims was to hold together the moderate and liberal elements in the Alliance and to keep them efficient in war-making. The appeal for winning the war to these ends must be to the liberal-minded forces. The reactionaries were too few and divisive. Thus, right in the crisis of the western offensive, the *Saturday Review* was whitewashing Turkey and satirizing "stories" of Turkish injustice to subject races. Some were seeking a road to the old-fashioned sort of "peace" which would bolster up Turkey in the balance of power. Lord Denbigh, aided in the Tory press, was mocking the idea of a league of nations. He described the efforts in its behalf of such men as Lord Buckmaster and Lord Parmoor as revolting. Another section of the Tory press had initiated an attack on the Vatican. Ireland was to be conscripted. These were a few instances out of many of the absence of cohesion among the reactionaries.

Opposed to this disruption, these scattered and antagonistic aims, these "infinitely repellent particles," held together by the militancy of Lloyd George, was the democratic war policy of the British labor movement and British liberals, which found in President Wilson their greatest interpreter. To maintain the clarity and fighting edge of that war policy, the British labor movement and British middle-class liberals needed the sympathy and coöperation of American public opinion.

A distinguished government official, who had recently made an investigation of British conditions, wrote at this time that he found

a lassitude due to uneasiness felt as to the future by the privileged classes, and a lassitude among the lowest classes. There is no clear

general realization of the extent and danger of this lassitude. I found among the captains of industry a childish optimism as to the future. I have heard all sorts of opinions, optimistic in official circles, far less so from certain labor leaders.

The controlling majority of the British labor movement clearly realized this lassitude and was fighting against it by striving for a united industrial population back of the democratic goals held aloft in its war aims and in its reconstruction plan. A spiritual unity of command back of the line was as much needed as the unity of military command achieved in the person of General Foch. Toward creating and sustaining this united western front of labor the American visitation of April and May, 1918, was a hindrance and not a help.



## CHAPTER XXI

### THE SO-CALLED SPLIT

IN the chapter "The Right Strikes Back," the separatist movements at both extreme wings of British labor were brought out. The June (1918) conference witnessed the first Labour Party election under the new constitution. The executive was to be composed of twenty-two persons, of whom thirteen were to be representative of the trade unions and other affiliated organizations, five of local organizations, four women, all to be elected by the conference as a whole. Less than four per cent of that whole were socialist party members. The election was absolutely in the hands of the union vote. Yet, although the I. L. P. had lost its right to separate representation, two of the members actually elected to the Labour Party executive were also members of the I. L. P. executive, one was an ex-member, one of the four women members was Mrs. Philip Snowden, and Ramsay MacDonald was reëlected treasurer. This made up a third of the executive, and with two or three other members holding much the same views the decisive swing toward the left was now registered by nearly one-half the executive.

Thus, the voting indicated that the policies held by the Independent Labour Party alone in the earlier years of the war had become the political expression of an increasing number of trade unionists. This represented a reaction against the knock-out policy as that was interpreted by its British spokesman, at a time when the mailed fist policy of the German General Staff was at its climax. The controlling trade union membership believed in the government's use of the military weapon and, therefore, continued the labor members in it. They distrusted the government's use of the diplomatic weapon and, therefore, set out to take over into their own hands the potentialities of working-class negotiations. They had adopted the ideology offered by their recognized radicals, brought them into their councils, but proposed to keep the execution of their alternative procedure in those same hands, rather than in those of any less inclusive body.

Meanwhile, with a general election in the offing, the extreme right had not been idle.

In May, J. A. Seddon and Victor Fisher of the British Workers

League, which attacked the Labour Party hip and thigh on war and domestic issues, and had put candidates in the field against it, gave out that it had

during the last 18 months, organized thousands of meetings among the working-classes throughout the country, at which the war aims of the country have been explained, and the iniquities of the enemy exposed. Hundreds of meetings, at which our speakers are enthusiastically applauded, are still being held every week. In addition to this, pamphlets and leaflets, exposing the devices of the pacifists, and explaining the objects of the war, and the scheme of national reconstruction put forward by our league for adoption after the war, are distributed by tens of thousands.

Early in the spring, J. B. Williams, head of the Amalgamated Musicians' Union (whose membership is 10,000), began issuing circulars advocating a Trade Union Party, to be run under the authority of the Trades Union Congress. One of the circulars was signed by twenty trade union officials and members, two of whom were members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress. At a joint meeting of the Parliamentary Committee and the Executive Committee of the British Labour Party, the following resolution was adopted by a vote of thirteen to four:

That this Joint Meeting of the Parliamentary Committee and Labour Party Executive, having considered the circular issued by J. B. Williams and signed by certain trade union officials, wherein an appeal is made for the formation of a Trade Union Labour Party which, in our opinion, is calculated to disrupt a movement built up by years of sacrifice, calls upon those responsible to immediately discontinue such action, and trusts no further steps will be necessary to enforce what loyalty our movement has a right to expect from those holding such responsible positions. . . .

The Executive Committee holds very strongly that no worse service could be rendered to the movement under present circumstances than that any attempt should be made to disrupt either the political or industrial forces of labor. . . .

Henderson warned the Labour Party at its June conference that "it was up against a very sinister attempt to paralyze the whole labor movement by division, coming from those who had done nothing to build up its strength." Immediately thereafter, W. J. Davis (Amalgamated Brass Workers), J. B. Williams and Havelock Wilson got up a meeting at Caxton Hall, Westminster, to "repudiate" the breaking of the party truce by the Labour Party, to promote the rival trade union body, and to advance the cause of the five

year boycott agitated by the sailors. This they proceeded to do.<sup>1</sup> The Caxton Hall meeting was reported to have been attended by four hundred individuals. It was not a delegate conference which delegates, authorized by the vote of their unions, had been sent. Davis, who presided, said the meeting was to "oppose the tactics of a despicable section of the Labour Party who represented pacifist opinions," and Williams, who acted as secretary, that "they did not want a peace such as the Bolsheviks had obtained." "Behind the intention to force a crisis" in the government, he saw the "sinister figure of Lord Lansdowne." Clearly they were striking at the Labour Party in terms of the I. L. P. Havelock Wilson assured them that there would be no sudden appearance of Kerensky with kisses for the chairman, but said that he had intended to introduce some representatives of a Russian committee which included a Cossack general, members of the Duma, and other representative bodies in Russia. They wanted an endorsement of the trade union movement in this country to assist the establishment of good government in Russia. The committee, he said, were of one opinion, that "Kerensky is a gas bag of the most dangerous type, and was responsible for the state of affairs in Russia." The incident is of significance only as throwing a sidelight on the international affiliations of some of the promoters of the meeting. They were for military intervention in Russia, for counter-revolution, and apparently were not unfriendly to the restoration of the Romanoffs. Wilson went into greater details about this Russian committee in the *Morning Post*, a reactionary paper:

They [the committee] simply ask that the Russian people be allowed to work out their own salvation, and they request that the

<sup>1</sup> The resolutions adopted, which were circulated among trade unionists in advance, follow:

"(1) This Congress declares in favor of a distinct political Labour Party for the trade union movement, based on the representation of and controlled by congress, and instructs the Parliamentary Committee to take the steps necessary to establish a Trade Union Labour Party.

"(2) That this Congress records its condemnation of the brutal murders and robbery of British and neutral seamen on the high seas by the commanders and crews of German U-boats. We further regret that such piracy has been justified by prominent leading trade unionists in Germany, members of the Central Council of the International Transport Workers' Federation, L. Brunner, J. Doring, Paul Muller, and Oswald Schumann. This meeting is, therefore, of opinion that there can be no peace by negotiation with a nation which attempts to justify such abominable crimes as those committed on the high seas. It, therefore, resolves that for a period of five years there shall be no intercourse with the German nation unless the people take full Parliamentary control over their Kaiser and Government and make full reparation for the crimes committed."

Allied governments will give them a force of about 30,000 allied troops, representative of all nations on the Allies' side, to start from Vladivostok and help the Russian Cossacks and others to link up and formulate some government. The Siberians favor a republican form of government, others down South are in favor of a limited monarchy, but that is a matter they assure me can be adjusted among themselves.

Here was the famous labor split which misled one or two of the delegation from the American Federation of Labor into thinking they had started something that would disrupt the British Labour Party. Williams, Davis, Wilson and their unions were not affiliated with the British Labour Party, so that they could scarcely qualify as splitters from something to which they did not belong. The new party was the creation of a handful of men, in nearly all instances without the backing of their trade unions.

The Tory *Morning Post* was of the same way of thinking as the American labor delegates and hailed the Caxton Hall outfit as the "genuine trade union political party." Responsible trade union opinion was to the contrary. Said J. W. Ogden, chairman of the Parliamentary Committee:

There are two necessary parts to the labor movement—the industrial and the political. You will have the whole-hearted support of the Parliamentary Committee (the executive of the Trades Union Congress) in deprecating any attempt to hurt the Labour Party. We back Mr. Henderson. To go outside of the party is not the way to work any reform. I say on behalf of the industrial movement, anything that disrupts the political movement disrupts the industrial movement. If the matter of the new trade union political party comes before the Trades Union Congress, I hope it will meet the same unity of opposition as in this conference.

The *Observer*, a Sunday newspaper and review which is a semi-official government organ in that its editor is an interpreter of the Lloyd George policy, had this to say:

Mr. Davis and his friends show wisdom in adopting a trade union basis for their venture and not merely starting a rival political party of the ordinary type, as the British Workers' League did in founding the National Democratic and Labour Party. Trade union feeling might conceivably be exploited and a fraction of the union membership be detached from the socialist alliance. But the attempt is made too late. The issue was decided when the new constitution of the (real) Labour Party was under discussion. This constitution, retaining as it does the block vote and the predominance of the unions, gives the most conservative among them the safeguards



they need against pacifism, revolution and all the other bogies—and they know it. The labor movement means to act as a unit for political purposes; the Labour Party is a very efficient instrument for this intention. The right wing will tolerate any slight failure in enthusiasm for the party's war aims on the part of the left wing, and will stay within the party itself even if it has not quite digested The New Social Order for which the left wing is mainly responsible.

On July 1, the *Manchester Guardian* said:

Far from splitting, the Labour Party is drawing closer together and bringing in fresh recruits at the same time that it is shifting politically towards the position of its left wing.

#### THE SAILORS AND THEIR BOYCOTT

Some of the attendants at the Caxton Hall meeting turned up that same evening at a meeting of the Merchant Seamen's League, the object of which, according to the indefatigable Havelock Wilson, was "to discover the true voice of labor regarding the war." Here Commander Sir Edward Nichol presided and G. H. Roberts, Minister of Labour, expressed himself as ready to join with the merchant seamen and other sections of the community in determining that they would not enter into trade relationship with Germany until she had "after years of purging" proved her right to be admitted into the comity of civilized nations. The guest of the evening was none other than the prime minister of the commonwealth of Australia. Hughes said, among other things:

I am glad to have the opportunity to pay my tribute of respect and admiration for the part played by Mr. Havelock Wilson. (Cheers.) He has shown to the world what unionism, rightly directed, can do. He has shown the power of labor, and that a man may be a keen and resolute fighter for the rights of labor and yet be a patriot. Labor has great opportunities opened to it by the war. It has great responsibilities thrown upon it. It might take, if it liked, the path that has been blazed for it by the Bolsheviks, it might sink into some bottomless morass, or it might turn resolutely and tread that steep and difficult path that patriotism and common sense alike dictate.

By the end of August, the League reported that it had distributed 1,500,000 copies of its manifesto and declaration form among trade unionists in and out of the service. Havelock Wilson gave out:

A letter from a brigade major, "written by direction and on behalf of Brigadier-General A. R. Harman, C.M.G., D.S.O.," asks

that 1,000 copies of the declaration form should be sent for distribution among the officers and men of the brigade.

"People at home," writes another soldier, "have no idea of the feeling overseas among the men, and they will be considerably surprised when they come home and express their opinions. In the meantime, and in the event of an election, there must be no doubt of the battle cry. The lads out here will stick it all right if you only keep on backing them up as you are doing."

A captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps says he is in favor of the boycott, and adds: "Please make it 60 years." A soldier three years in the trenches wants "a clean sweep of our Huns who misrepresent us in Parliament and out." Another demands that labor shall "shift the Bolos from the trade union ranks."

Wilson carried his campaign personally to the heart of Robert Smillie's district in Scotland and, reporting on meetings at Larkhall and Hamilton, said:

There would be about 500 people present—as many as the hall would hold—and the audience seemed to be about equally divided. The "Bolshies," however, were not local people; they had been beaten up from the whole of Scotland. The only question they put was "What about Stockholm?" I told them this was the very subject on which I had intended to address them. We seamen gloried in the fact that we prevented the peace delegates from going to Stockholm. What was more, so long as the war continued, whether the Government issued passports or not, the seamen would absolutely decline to carry these people. The declaration was received with shouts of "Shame!"

The declaration of the Merchant Seamen's League which relatives and friends were asked to send to men on active service, pronounced in favor of the formation of a Trades Union Political Party "free from Bolshevik influence" and in support of the boycott. Its purpose was to

be able to announce at the Trades Union Congress at Derby, on September 3, the actual number of trades unionists who are utterly opposed to the pacifist proclivities of some of the labor leaders, and thus to show how little mere block votes as manipulated by such men really represent the true voice of labor.

In an interview in the *Times*, Wilson said, "I am convinced that German money and influence are behind the pacific movement in the labor world." It was the Merchant Seamen's League, however, which had funds sufficient not only to send out these declarations by the million, but to give the luncheon at Derby in honor of Hughes and his apostleship of an economic war after the war—

to which not only was Gompers invited, but "all the delegates to the conference."

The week of the Derby Congress (September, 1918), Havelock Wilson reported his tally of declarations<sup>1</sup> as follows:

Votes of members of the fighting forces for a five years' boycott of the Germans .....	550,000
Votes of members of trade unions in the fighting forces for a purely trade union political party.....	152,000

But not only was his Caxton Hall resolution for a five-year boycott disposed of adversely, but the Ships' Stewards and Cooks (rebellion below decks!) were there with an amendment to hamstring its scheme of economic exploitation of the seamen's wrongs by offering (in line with the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist memorandum) an alternative punishment to fit the crime of the U-boats. They proposed to delete the last paragraph of the resolution and substitute the following:

This Congress therefore resolves that in case of an Allied victory no peace will be considered adequate unless those who are responsible for the putting into operation of the submarine warfare (which has resulted in the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children by the sinking of non-combatant and hospital ships) and those who have carried out these instructions shall be brought to trial, and such punishment meted out to them as they deserve.

More, on motion of the London compositors,<sup>2</sup> the Derby congress reaffirmed its belief in free trade. Jack Jones, of the General Work-

<sup>1</sup>"As to Mr. Wilson and block votes, he had a letter which stated that at Doncaster, where Mr. Wilson's representative invited signatures to his boycott and trade union party proposals, forty children signed that petition in half an hour, and another signatory was a youth well known in the town as an idiot. (Laughter.)"—J. H. Thomas, at Derby: from the *London Times*.

<sup>2</sup>"T. E. Naylor (London Compositors) moved a resolution reaffirming the opinion of last year's Congress, that the economic conditions created by the war have in no way altered the fundamental truth that free trade between the nations is the broadest and surest foundation for world prosperity and international peace in the future, and that any departure from the principle of free trade in this country would be detrimental to the interests of the working classes, and injurious to the prosperity of the nation as a whole. The War Cabinet, he said, had come to a decision in favor of preference within the Empire. Labor must be on its guard. 'We have in this country,' said Mr. Naylor, 'one whom I might describe as the high priest of protection, Mr. W. M. Hughes. He is the guest of this country, and is stumping the country at our expense in support of tariffs and protection within the Empire. I am anxious that this Congress should let the Government know that we are in earnest in maintaining free trade not as a positive policy, but as a barrage against the raid by so-called

ers, provoked a laugh by saying the composers' resolution was, in the circumstances, like a piece of sticking plaster on a wooden leg; it would mean letting in the products of prison labor of Austria and Germany and of sweated labor the world over; but the vote stood 2,711,000 to 591,000.

The "sailors'" propaganda for the 5 year (later 7 year) boycott on German goods was meant to alienate trade unionists from the war-aims memorandum with its strong positions in favor of a league of nations grounded in justice and economic freedom, and against any new economic war after the war or any throw-back to the old scheme of competing imperialisms. It was an effort to spike the policies of the British Labour Party just as the new "trade union" party was an attempt to scuttle the organization that had the hardihood to promote those policies. But, as we have seen, when it came to the composite peace resolution<sup>1</sup> at Derby (Chapter XVII), Havelock Wilson stood practically alone. The "new majority" had all but become a new unanimity. On a show of hands not ten in the entire assembly were raised against the resolution. J. H. Thomas, in moving it, related it to the whole British labor procedure which for a full year had been under bitter assault.

Thomas held both edges of labor's blade to the light:

Whatever may be said about differences on the war, whatever fault may be found with governments or statesmen, there is no fault to be found with the courage and the sacrifices of our brave boys. (Loud cheers.) But when it appears that the dark clouds are shifting, when it appears after four years of struggle that some success at last is attending their efforts, do not let us make the mistake of tempering our war aims merely by the war map. It is useless to be told by our press that Germany alters her view as the war situation reforms, who are out for all they can get at the expense of the staple industries of the country. Nothing has taken place since the war began to cause us to change our opinion on this question.' (Cheers.)—*The London Times*.

<sup>1</sup> The resolution:

"This Congress reaffirms the Blackpool Congress resolution and calls for the war aims of the Labour and Socialist parties of the Central Powers in answer to the war aims of the Inter-Allied Conference held in London, which stands for the destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world, or if it cannot be presently destroyed, at the least its reduction to virtual impotence; and further demands that when peace is being discussed adequate labor representation be afforded at the peace conference.

"The Congress urges the Government to establish peace negotiations immediately the enemy either voluntarily or by compulsion evacuates France and Belgium, and reaffirms its belief in the principle of the international as the safest guarantee of the world's peace."



tion changes. If it is wrong for Germany to do that, it is equally wrong for us. If we are fighting, as I believe the soldiers are, for a great, high, and moral principle that will stamp out militarism, then that principle must be fought for through good or through ill times. Let labor boldly and definitely lay it down here that, if success is following the efforts of our troops, we are still fighting for an ideal which will not be changed by their success; and, in the same way, if again we have to go through the shadow of the experiences of three and four years, equally will we say, "Our cause is right. Our aims are good," and principles must triumph in the end.

There are a large number of people who criticize us because we believe in the *Internationale*. This resolution asks you to reaffirm your belief in it. My answer to those who discredit the *Internationale* is this: The *Internationale* has not failed; it has never been properly tried. It is for us to see, when the war is over and peace again reigns, that we, the working classes of all countries, direct our power and influence at all times to make it impossible for a few people again to cause such hell and carnage as they have caused during the past four years. Let us therefore carry this resolution, not only unanimously, but with enthusiasm. Let this message go forth, not only to our soldiers and sailors and to our allies, but to the enemy as well, that British labor would not sacrifice one life to add a yard to the territory of the British Empire. (Cheers.) Let the message go forth that labor would not spend a penny to add to the power of Kings and Emperors. (Cheers.) But we as a movement, with all the experience of four years of war, are concerned to fight on and on until the cause of all wars, which is militarism, is removed. (Cheers.)

Let us, in this jubilee year of our Congress, say: "Not only is labor united, but on the ashes of this awful hell and slaughter we will build up a movement, not local, not national, but international, so that the workers of the world will know that the brotherhood of man is the best guarantee for peace." (Loud cheers.)

On his return to America, James Wilson, chairman of the American labor delegation, had said—and his prophecy was duly cabled to the *London Times*:

We also expect that when the British Trades Union Congress meets in September it will resolve to strike out the resolution adopted in 1917, by which it was urged that conferences should be held with representatives from enemy countries.

He had also expected much, it will be recalled, from the new trade union party. So had a company of American pro-war socialists who in July were to be found addressing mass meetings in Trafalgar Square in company with W. A. Appleton, secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, with J. B. Williams, secre-

tary of the Caxton Hall meeting which gave birth to the new trade union political movement that was to disrupt the Labour Party. They were members of the Social Democratic League, of which William English Walling is secretary, and they had posted off to England on the return of the American Federation of Labor delegation. Their coming to complete the job which the trade unionists had begun was considered so important that all question of passports was waived by a disinterested government!

The resolution for a trade union party came before the Derby Congress on motion of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union, the dock laborers, the cardroom operators and seven other unions, whose aggregate voting power was 243,350. They secured adherents that brought their total to 567,000, but the project, as moved by Havelock Wilson, was snowed under by a vote of 3,815,000. A suggestion that a trade union federation be formed inside the Labour Party was more favorably received on another division, but was nonetheless voted down three to one.

Americans are prone to forget the genius of compromise in the British. They march up to a crisis and then settle their differences and go on together. In these war years, the British Labour Party had been confronted by the British Workers' League, the National Democratic and Labour Party, the Trade Union Party, and tomorrow it will be some other. A few halls will be hired. A few elderly Tories will attend and make common cause with a knot of Victorian labor leaders. Then still another new political party will be launched, again with the same old group of jolly tars on the poop. Again Captain Tupper and Havelock Wilson will be hailed by the *Morning Post* as saviours of England. Again certain noble lords will tell us that the great heart of the British workingman is in the right place. If, then, Northcliffe, Hughes, Bottomley and Pemberton Billing will lead in the cheering, the ceremony will be complete. But Havelock Wilson, Seddon and Victor Fisher (with their various parties and more to come) will never pry Clynes, Ogden, Thomas, Purdy, Smillie, Robert Williams and the other masters of trade unionism loose from the Labour Party. And where coal and cotton, transport and shipbuilding are found, there too will be found the rest of trade unionism. Neither the head of the Musicians' Union nor Wilson and his Cossacks and commanders will make any permanent dent on the ranks of organized labor.

Now the part which American labor played throughout this period cannot be so lightly dismissed. Professing to be at odds with trade union political movement at home, it mixed outrageously in British politics and it mixed on the side against its professions—on the side which was at odds with the Wilson policies of a league of nations

and of economic freedom. Moreover, it ran the risk of thwarting the responsible labor leadership of the new majority, and of throwing the entire British movement over to the extreme left.

#### SNIPING AT HENDERSON

Throughout all this period Henderson stood up under a barrage from batteries trained on him from the camps not alone of Hughes and Havelock Wilson and the boycottists, but also from those of the extreme left of the British socialists, of the German government socialists, and of the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy of which Samuel Gompers is president.

Thus Henderson's central policy for the Labour Party, with its new constitution, throwing the power still more to the trade unions, was attacked from the extreme left by Bruce Glazier in the *Labour Leader*:

The growing Prussianism of the trade union official mind is seen conspicuously in the treatment of what may be termed the "smaller nationalities" within the affiliation. The sweeping away of the federal principle under which, since the foundation of the party, the socialist section has been entitled to separate and distinctive representation on the executive, is significant of the reactionary trend. Nowhere outside the German military states can be found a system of bureaucracy, of complicated and undemocratic representation of power, comparable to that embodied in the new constitution of the British Labour Party.

Another portent of the situation is the duplication of official trade union influence by means of the joint board consultations and agreements between the Trades Union Parliamentary Committee and the Labour Party executive. The agreement between these two bodies to exclude socialist delegates, and indeed minority delegations of any kind, from the Stockholm and the inter-Allied conferences, is a sufficiently clear indication of the drift of policy in higher official trade union circles.

It is true that Henderson believed that the Labour Party should be predominantly the expression of the trade unionists on their political side. The trade unionists did not reject him for this policy. And, socialistic himself, the opposition of socialists did not swerve him. It is also true that he had said:

The indispensable necessity for a league of nations is the destruction—the complete destruction—of absolute government, with its Kaisers and its Tsars, to be replaced by a free democracy.

That explains why he was hated in Germany in such quarters as were indicated by the London *Times* of June 18:

The German "radical" press is busily representing Mr. Arthur Henderson as an incurable chauvinist and fire-eater, who is stubbornly clinging to the Memorandum on War Aims adopted by the inter-Allied socialists. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* summarizes in this sense Mr. Henderson's references to the American labor delegation, and says:

The war aims program which the Labor Party issued some time ago, and which doubtless still holds good, is in all important points identical with the demands of Lloyd George and of the other Entente statesmen. What Henderson demands is nothing else than a subjection of Germany to these demands. It needs the darkness of ignorance for anybody to talk in such a fashion, in view of the present situation, of the possibility of a peace with Germany. The oily and swollen phrases of Henderson, who talks as if it was for him to grant or refuse peace, sound like a challenge. Probably they are not intended to be that, but they are in comic contrast with the events on the world stage, and still more with the insignificant part which Henderson played as long as he was a member of the government.

This German estimate of Henderson could only be compared with the estimate of him by an American radical. Under the title "The Kaiser's Last Hope—Arthur Henderson and Philip Scheidemann," the American Alliance for Labor and Democracy sent out through its publicity organization an article by William English Walling, the opening paragraph of which follows:

President Wilson has divided Germany's tools into two classes, agents and dupes. Mr. Gompers has expressed the same thought in referring to the conscious and the unconscious tools of Germany. The most valuable conscious tool of the Kaiser at the present moment, far more valuable than Ludendorff, is Philip Scheidemann, the leader of Germany's Majority Socialists. By far the most valuable of the Kaiser's unconscious tools or dupes is Arthur Henderson, leader of the British pacifists, and formerly the leader of the British labor movement.

And again in July, the Alliance sent out a broad sheet from the same pen under the title, "The Drive for a Teutonic Peace: Arthur Henderson's attempt to camouflage the Stockholm peace conspiracy," which began:

The German socialist "international," together with its branches in Sweden, Holland and America and other countries, has decided to hold a pseudo "international" conference at Berne, Switzerland, probably in July, in order to bring an immediate end to the war—with little or no regard to the fate of the conquered peoples the Kaiser now has in his power.



The pacifist fanatics of England and the defeatists of France, by shrewd manœuvering have secured the support for this purpose of all the socialist parties of the Entente countries, including the British Labour Party and the French Federation of Labor. However, the delegates from the American Federation of Labor on their recent visit to Europe put the advocates of this scheme on the defensive. Led by Arthur Henderson, the defeatists have devised an elaborate scheme of camouflage to hide the real purpose of the conference.

But British labor knew its man. It remembered that Henderson's eldest son was killed fighting at the front. It knew that his second son was wounded and incapacitated for front line service, but that he reëntered service and was in charge of a department of supplies with the army in France. It knew that his youngest son was fighting.

#### LABOR IN OPPOSITION

The counterpart of such tactics was not, however, without its effect on the British electorate as a whole, when the elections were finally set between armistice and peace. The coalition, only partially successful in maneuvering an uncontested election, closed its campaign in violent appeals to vengeance and self-interest. Germany must be made to pay the whole cost of the war even if the indemnity exceeded the entire national wealth. The Labour Party was denounced as "tainted by pacifism, internationalism and Bolshevism."

Before picking up the threads of labor developments in the international field throughout the fall of 1918, that will carry our narrative to the close of the war, the outcome of the December (1918) elections can be summarized here briefly in relation to the political and industrial currents that have been traced in recent chapters.

At a special conference in mid-November, the British Labour Party (after spirited debate in which, as already noted, Clynes led the opposition, and then resigned from the ministry and threw in his lot with labor) decided to break with the coalition and face admitted defeat at a juncture when peace was not yet secure, for the sake of blazing its way for independence on its own platform of a democratic peace and social reconstruction.

In the landslide for Lloyd George as the triumphant war leader, Henderson no less than Asquith and Dillon went down; but while the Liberal Party was crumpled into a shell of its old self and the old Asquithian leaders were routed en masse, labor made gains. Exaggerated pre-election claims had been made by both its exuberant friends and its shrewdest enemies. The wave of nationalism,

which swept England because of the military victory, submerged the labor internationalists of the extreme left, including Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald, William C. Anderson and F. W. Jowett. Barnes, defeated for the labor nomination in his own constituency, Roberts, Havelock Wilson and others of the government labor following of the extreme right were swept in with the tide. The British Workers' League went into the lists in a new incarnation as the National Democratic party and its president won over Arthur Henderson in a three-cornered fight in East Ham. By funds subscribed through the *Morning Post* and other organs of privileged groups, it financed thirty candidates which deprived the Labour Party of a dozen or more seats. But with the whole force of the situation in their favor, and the whole power of the coalition behind them, they did not split the Labour Party and less than ten labor men hold coalition seats. On the other hand the Labour Party itself lifted its representation from thirty-five to fifty-nine and became for the first time in British history the largest independent group in Parliament and in that sense the official party of the opposition, around which rally all the revolts, all the newly forming forces of public opinion.

But the Parliamentary showing is no measure of the Labour Party's strength. In an election in which only a share of the soldiers were able to exercise the franchise, labor's vote was within one million of that cast for the Unionist Party which numerically controls the coalition, headed by the radical premier it had fought in pre-war days. The 400 coalition seats were won by four million votes. The Labour Party cast nearly two and one-half million in winning its fifty-nine seats. This is one of the most glaring anomalies in the British system of redistributed constituencies—that labor should hold but one-eighth as many seats as the coalition, when it polled five-eighths as many votes.

Under such circumstances, if the labor movement comes to regard its political power thwarted by the election machinery, and finds its hopes for a reconstructed England balked by the party in power, it will instinctively turn to the use of industrial pressure by strikes and the threat of strikes. It has a century of experience in the use of the industrial weapon, whereas a brief term of eighteen years is its experience in the political field.

Significantly, Robert Smillie was at this same juncture reëlected to the presidency of the Miners' Federation by a three to one majority. And the miners insisted that hereafter he give full-time service in a paid job, instead, as formerly, part-time service in an honorary capacity. This meant that Smillie gave up his plan to "stand" for a Parliamentary seat at the General Election. And

it meant that while the miners have the largest labor group at Westminster, they hold in reserve their industrial organization in asserting their demands for social change. By mid-winter, after general strikes in Glasgow and Belfast in which the shop-stewards figured, the Triple Alliance was to make united demands (including nationalization of the mines) and the government was to counter by setting up a new inclusive joint body, representing all the interests in British industry.

The leaders of the "Centre," like John Robert Clynes, of equal strength in the trade union movement as in the political movement, are desirous that the new power of labor shall exert itself through the established channels of government. Clynes said at the close of 1918:

So far as I have any authority or influence with regard to the working people of this country, I want to resent in the strongest terms the declarations now being made to invite the organized working classes of the country to use the industrial weapon, the weapon of the strike, to attain their political ends.

The masses of wage earners form the greater part of the electorate, and there is no economic alteration which organized workers desire, which they cannot obtain from the floor of the House of Commons, if they send their representatives there in large enough numbers. Labor should stand for law and order, because the time may come when labor may have to make the law, when labor will expect and call upon other sections of the community to respect the law.

If labor expects that example to be followed, it must set it now.

Which course—constitutional, political and economic reform or industrial direct action—will prevail in the counsels of labor depends on the capacity of political democracy to assert itself constructively at Westminster.

Such a conservative publicist as J. L. Garvin, editor of *The Observer*, in a pre-election statement advocating the return of Lloyd George, wrote:

Either we must undertake with clear eyes and firm hands a constructive revolution, not shrinking in the process from a large extension of public control, or the general order here will be menaced. After the Great War and its astounding revelation of how pigmy were our pre-war efforts for the improvement of human life and happiness by comparison with the colossal ability and power since employed in a necessary destruction, the masses everywhere demand a new society. After the most frightful of wars, changing forever the mind and aspirations of the people, we have to transform—from top to bottom and throughout—the whole social and industrial organization of Great Britain. Unless we do that a tidal wave of revolutionary feeling will sweep the polls a very few years from now.

Henceforth Labor and Capital face each other as equal in human dignity and status. Labor is done for ever and for ever with the old relationship of 'master and man.' The workers want the profit of large public services on a national basis to go to public uses instead of to private pockets. After the Great War that is what they want. The conservative forces everywhere must willingly give more than they have given or seem yet prepared to give, or it will be much the worse for them. In this country they must face the extension of public control in five or six large spheres of public life.



## CHAPTER XXII

### IN FRANKLIN'S FOOTSTEPS

IN the course of his address at the Derby meeting of the British Trades Union Congress (September, 1918), Samuel Gompers swept away part of his notes and announced that he was "shortening his line on the international front." He did just that. Within the month he sat in at a reconvened session in London of the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference; and American labor struck hands on war aims with the Allied socialist and labor formation.

"We of this Labor Mission," Gompers had been quoted as saying at the government luncheon tendered him on his arrival (with Barnes in the chair, supported by three of his colleagues in the War Cabinet, the Prime Minister, Lord Milner and Chamberlain), "have come here for the purpose of endeavoring to unite the workers of Great Britain, of France, and of Italy to stand together as one solid phalanx to make good the declaration of American labor." Now, unity among the workers of Great Britain and France, of Italy and Belgium had been achieved seven months earlier, with American labor "out of it" in the interval. And the new unity, to which American labor became party in the remaining two months of war, was not achieved by swinging them to the American labor position on the one question of procedure upon which it had kept aloof, but by recognizing the common principles which had animated labor's war aims on both sides of the Atlantic and upon which Henderson had pleaded in vain with the earlier American labor delegation to make public cause with them. It was not the one-ply military policy of the president of the American Federation of Labor, but the dual military-political offensive of the American President upon which they found common footing, or, to be specific, his 14 war-aims, which no sooner had been put out in January, 1918, than they were subscribed to as kindred to their own in a joint statement by Henderson for the British Labour Party and Bowerman for the British Trades Union Congress.

We must go back to the days of Benjamin Franklin for a figure comparable to that of Samuel Gompers on his wartime mission to England, France and Italy. To help American readers visualize European labor gatherings, we have set down our impressions of

some of their leaders, men and women. As a matter of comity, the process should be reversed. Not the least graphic and appreciative of the sketches of the president of the A. F. of L. was that published by *L'Opinion* on the occasion of his visit to Paris:—

A stocky little man of whom one forgets the height in seeing only the strong and whimsical face, the big nose, big lips, a complexion colored like a sun brick, a scalp almost bare with some few tufts of gray hair mixed with black threads. All at once this countenance appears illuminated, animated as it is incessantly by his astonishing bright eyes in which sparkling gold and green appear. These changing eyes, which brighten and darken, turn themselves directly to you in inquiry and conquest. The first impression is one of mobility, of force and almost as much of charm. It is one of the faces whose modeling and expression tempt a painter. . . .

Samuel Gompers is not merely an orator with a magic voice. From the first meeting, his personality strikes you and impresses itself on you. Still less can we define it in a formula such as an American proposed to me: "He reminds me absolutely of a Scotch Calvinist preacher."

We see him seated in an armchair with a big cigar in his hand patiently lending an ear to the questions of an interviewer. From politeness he has put a French rose which some one has offered him in his buttonhole. He listens—this orator is a singularly good listener; he makes you repeat, put your question more precisely. He is in no hurry to reply; prudence is his first virtue.

However sure his thought may be, he seeks a form that will express it better. He foresees and obviates any interpretation which will misrepresent it. He proceeds step by step. With a definite character, with an emphasis of the voice he impresses the idea, the fact to which he wishes to draw attention. His hand is nervous, underscored by a sober gesture. For him there is no question of leaving to the many chances which a lack of precision has in store for those who leave to developments the trouble of working out their precise thought. This prudence is a sort of honesty, a feeling of responsibility. If he measures his words it is because he knows that every word is an act.

Samuel Gompers has both the inclination and the gift for action and, what is not always reconcilable, he is a strong man: "I am proud to live in an epoch in which action is everything; in which there is not a thought, a passing impulse but which can and must be translated by an act." And he adds: "I am proud to live in an epoch in which if the young men of 20 have the maturity of those of 30, those of 60 have the energy of those of 40."

Energy and vitality which abound in the man create his convictions. The conception which Gompers has of democracy is that of an extremely mobile society, in which liberty has the first place, in which liberty permits every personality to come to birth, to be formed, to assert itself frankly in complete freedom of movements:

"We wish to be masters of our destinies and that every one in the universe shall have the possibility of living his whole life. We wish to have the right to make mistakes, to commit errors, provided that the opportunity is given us to express ourselves. This is the privilege of democracy."

A strong personality, he feels no distrust for other individualities; on the contrary, he thinks that the desires of the masses cannot express themselves through persons whose action is embarrassed by shibboleths and traditions of party, and that their interests will be better defended than they are by energetic and independent men capable of listening to reason, but of holding their own against caprice. He believes that the great force operating in the world is that of bodies of free men animated by the same spirit, closely linked together by mutual esteem and sympathetic reciprocity. In accordance with certain essential principles of action, they are always ready to renew their agreement by amicable discussions and to recast every day, if necessary, their action. . . .

Of course, not President Gompers but Colonel House would come to mind in pressing deeper the analogy to America's first diplomat of democracy. The visits of the quiet-spoken Texan to England and the Continent earlier in the war, his unpretentious but potent part in the conferences at Versailles which promoted Allied unity in military command and economic co-operation, in armistice and in peace, afford a closer parallel to the mission of the great Pennsylvanian to England before the American Revolution and to France while it was on. None the less, in more ways than one, Gompers may be said to have followed in Franklin's footsteps: his rise from a cigarmakers' apprentice to a foremost leader of men; his coming from Britain as a lad to make his way in the New World, like the coming of the Boston printer's boy to Philadelphia; and his picturesque claim, in his advanced years, upon the retina of the French capital. But it is his part in inter-Allied labor activity at the London Conference that concerns us here.

Gompers' information had been of the worst from the start. The correspondence published in the *American Federationist* was peppered with the names of Havelock Wilson, Appleton, Victor Fisher and their like. The hand-picked British labor delegation to the United States in the early months of 1918 was of a sort to amplify their misrepresentations. The much escorted American delegation which visited England in the spring was confident that the future of the British labor movement lay in the hands of that same crowd at the extreme right. With the exception of Clynes (who was listed in a group of officials at a dinner at the House of Commons) the American delegation's report did not name any of the outstanding leaders of the British labor majority. Barnes, Roberts, Hodges,

"Brother" Appleton had place in their report along with Balfour, Beaverbrook, Milner, Churchill; it was set down how Queen Mary "found occasion to converse with each member of the mission"; how Lord Northcliffe got out of bed to "wish them a Godspeed on their journey home"; but so far as the great body of delegates attending the St. Paul convention of the American Federation of Labor were informed, Thomas, Smillie, Henderson, Bowerman, Ogden, McGurk, Purdy and other chief executives of British labor might well have been bird fanciers or collectors of postage stamps.

#### GOMPERS ARRIVES

It was Appleton and Havelock Wilson who in July sent a message to Gompers to the effect that his presence in Great Britain would help the trade union movement and the Allied cause. And again, we find Appleton, Fisher, Havelock Wilson and company listed in the august welcoming company at the dinner at the House of Commons on August 30, alongside the Lord Mayor of London, Waldorf Astor, five peers, four members of the War Cabinet, and no end of Sirs. In the course of his remarks, the Prime Minister said:—

Mr. Samuel Gompers' name is one of the few international names—one of the few names which is as well known in other countries as it is in his own. If I may say so, he is as well known as the Mississippi. (Laughter and cheers.) I think I may claim him to myself as a kindred spirit. He was one of the very few people who approved of me before the war (laughter), and therefore to me his presence here is doubly welcome. He and I have very largely the same ideals. We can say that we are fighting the same battle, and he and I, when the war came, in a true Christian spirit have forgiven the people who were suspicious of us (laughter), and we are fully prepared to coöperate with them for the attainment of ideals that we have always fought for. Mr. Gompers has devoted his life and his great abilities to democratic progress. He is fighting the same battle now in the war as he was fighting before. (Cheers.) It is not that he has changed his mind. It is not that he has changed his direction. It is not that he has altered his purpose. It is not that he has started a new career. He is pursuing the same career now, he is climbing towards the same ideals, he is struggling for the same aims as he devoted his long and honorable career to before the war. (Cheers.)

G. H. Roberts, Minister of Labour, followed with this:

Sam has never yet received encouraging replies from enemy countries (laughter), because the enemy knows full well that Sam Gompers represents the American people and their determination to



have no parleying with enemy representatives until victory has been attained, and until their government are in a position to negotiate a clean and enduring peace. Sam Gompers and his colleagues more correctly interpret the attitude of British labor than do some of those who arrogate to themselves the title of labor leaders.

Roberts went further in illuminating what the government labor group of the extreme right anticipated from Gompers' visit:—

We know that the contact of our guests with patriotic labor in this country will help us to defeat the efforts of those who would trick us into meeting with enemy subjects.

In rejoinder, Gompers said that he was

quite willing that the so-called intellectual party and the faddists should enjoy themselves in the *salons*, leaving the others of the working people to work out their destinies as best they could.

To quote the *London Times*:

Mr. Gompers, replying to the toast, said that a few days before he left Washington to proceed to an Atlantic port to embark he had the honor of an interview with President Wilson. He wanted not only to wish the President "Au revoir," but to ask him whether he had something he might like him to tell the people of Great Britain, France, and Italy. The President, in reply, told him the story of a little girl about seven years of age, who was doted upon by her parents. On her birthday she was given a box of blocks of letters. The child played with them and romped until the evening, and when she retired to bed and went down on her knees to pray she was too sleepy to say what she wanted. Putting the bricks on the ground, she said: "Oh, God, you know what I want to say. Let me say the best thing you would want me to say. Good-night. Amen." And the President stopped there, said Mr. Gompers, "and so I have really no message to-day, except that I know his spirit—a man of patience, a man of strong conviction, of deep feeling and high ideals, and so I have the privilege of conveying the message of the blocks of bricks, metaphorically thrown upon the floor at that meeting with the President. I have the right to say that the President and the people of the United States are with Great Britain and France and Italy and all the Allies in this struggle to the end, and to a victorious end. (Cheers.) Speaking as one who in part represents the great masses of the workers of America, I may say that we are wholeheartedly in this struggle."

Mr. Gompers proceeded to read a declaration made by the representatives of organized labor in America, on March 12, 1917, nearly a month before America's entry into the war. It was believed, he said, that that declaration had much influence in assuring the presi-

dent that the toilers would stand behind him and the government in whatever course was taken. After laying down the fundamental principles of right and justice, the declaration said:—

“We hereby pledge ourselves, in peace or in war, to stand unreservedly by the standards of liberty and the safety and preservation of the institutions and ideals of our republic. Should our country be thrown into the maelstrom of a European conflict, we offer our services to our country in every field of activity, to defend, safeguard, and preserve the republic against its enemies, whosoever they may be, and we call upon our fellow-workers and fellow-citizens in the holy name of liberty, justice, freedom, and humanity devotedly and patriotically to give like service.”

It must not be forgotten that in the United States there were about 12 millions of people of Teutonic extraction. That was a tremendous problem for the government. The government were not at first in a position to take action, but when outrages and murders which had been perpetrated against the allies were committed against their own American people, and when Americans engaged in peaceable pursuits were murdered in cold blood, the die was at once cast, the climax was reached, and the government declared that a state of war existed between their country and the Imperial German government. It was the consciousness of the attitude of the organized labor movement of their country that clarified the situation, and now they were engaged not in a war, but in a crusade.

#### SOCIALISM THE CRUX

It was just here that Gompers announced that the purpose of his mission was to “unite” the Allied workers. But there were those who appraised that mission contrariwise. According to a cable from the London correspondent to the New York *Tribune* he was called upon by none of the majority leaders who, with both the international trade union and international socialist organizations disrupted by the war, had slowly built a practical unity, embracing both elements, on the model of the British Labour Party itself. For explanation we have only to turn to the report to the St. Paul convention by the earlier American delegation. Any allegations that the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference (London, February, 1918) was animated by defeatist and pro-German forces were set aside in this first-hand American report. “With the exception of the self-confessed pacifists,” it said, “we found the British representatives stoutly insisting that the Allied armies must be loyally sustained by the workers in industry, and the German military machine defeated.” It found, however,

that the leaders in Great Britain are far from unanimous upon the advisability of holding an international conference and that there

also exists a divergence of opinion on the part of those who do, upon what it could accomplish and the conditions under which such a conference should be held. Many of those who believed in the holding of an international conference were vigorous in their belief that the German military machine must be defeated, their opinions being that such a conference would assist in bringing about this result through its influence upon the workers of Germany and Austria, and the effect upon the workers in the allied countries should the workers of the central powers refuse to participate.

The report indicated that back of the much discussed issue of an inter-belligerent conference, the American opposition was grounded upon the fact that the British Labour Party was socialist as well as trade union; and that the inter-Allied conference was like it. The crucial passage in the report read:

During the conferences held in London and Paris with representatives of the labor movement and in private conversations with many of the leaders in both countries, reference was made to the many existing conditions which could only be adequately met through the reestablishing of an effective International Federation of Labour. In both countries it was the unanimous opinion that it should be reestablished in a neutral country. At present there exists an unfortunate dearth of official records of the several national trade union movements, and owing to this it has been possible for politicians and the partisan and general press to spread much misinformation among the workers relative to the attitude of trade union leaders and official policies. There is a crying need for a much greater international exchange of trade union information, experience and ideas, which can only be accomplished satisfactorily through a central international trade union bureau or secretary. Such an international center is also most essential so that greater stability and unity of purpose may be established. In Great Britain and upon the European continent there exist to-day among the workers more or less joint industrial and political movements, the French workers having the joint committee of the *Confédération Generale du Travail* and the Socialist Party, while the British workers in their labor party include socialist groups, such as the Independent Labour Party, National Socialist Party, British Socialist Party and the Fabian Society. While these socialist groups work with the trade unions politically, they maintain their separate affiliation with the international socialist organization. Our European trade union brothers are the best judges of what their political activities should be and what affiliations, political or otherwise, these should include, but the existing condition tends nevertheless to emphasize the urgent necessity for a purely international trade union federation at which the industrial problems can be given ample consideration entirely apart from any political movements or considerations. It is unsafe and unsound to passively contemplate the influences exerted upon the trade union

movement in the great industrial nations of the world by political leaders, however sincere they may be, whose viewpoint and experiences are those of the theorist and politician. The policies and programs of the workers must be formulated by the workers themselves, acting through their industrial organizations, if their best interests are to be conserved.

For the significance attached to this report by a newspaper correspondent in touch with the American labor delegation which made it, let us turn to another dispatch in the *New York Tribune*. The *Tribune* had taken anything but a favorable view of the British labor offensive. This dispatch was from St. Paul at the time of the A. F. of L. convention:—

. . . The mission believes that the socialist party, which has maintained some sort of international organization during the war, is able to dominate the purely industrial labor movement, which has not. To political socialism, internationally organized, it attributes the growth of the demand for a conference with the Germans. . . . The members of the mission believe that the purely industrial labor movement should have as close an international organization as the socialist political movement, in order to combat it.

It is understood that the projected visit of Mr. Gompers to Europe, recommended in the closing sentence of the report, is to be a first step in the establishment of this international organization.

The mission's report is extremely frank in speaking of the policies of European labor bodies. Contrary to published statements, given out when the members first landed, it shows that the majority of French and British labor leaders cling firmly to their demand for an inter-belligerent labor conference—another "Stockholm," though the demand is receding somewhat during the present drives on the western front. . . . But the indorsement by the British Labour Party of the famous inter-Allied statement of war aims still stands.

A vigorous minority, however, led by Havelock Wilson, of the Seamen's Union, is opposing the conference and is seeking to wrest the labor movement in England free from socialist control. It is this minority, presumably, which would be made the nucleus of the proposed international trade union federation. . . .

The difference between the American Federation and the British Labour Party is more than a difference over technique. The proposed conference, if by any chance it were instrumental in ending the war, might make the socialist party dominant in Europe. . . . [!]

To understand this alignment, it is necessary to recall that, while under Samuel Gompers' leadership the American Federation of Labor had discountenanced efforts to form a trade union party,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the course of an interview in the *London Times* of September 11, Gompers described the relation of the American Federation of Labor to American political activity as follows:



American socialists did not confine themselves to the political field, but kept up a constant boring process within the ranks of the A. F. of L. This found expression in the not infrequent baiting of the

"It was a mistake to say that the American labor movement took no political action, but it was true to say that it held itself aloof from political parties. In America, the Federation of Labor yielded to no one, or any group of people, the right to speak in the name of labor. As a matter of fact, there was no political action which so far had proved so potent in furthering the interests of the working people as the political action taken by the American labor movement. When the Federation of Labor had declared itself on any project there was no one who undertook to present counter propositions or to take counter action. They had always taken political action as wage-earners. They presented to the political parties their demands and were perfectly willing that they should compete with each other for the support of labor at the polls. Instead of creating a political party, labor had adopted the policy of rewarding their friends and opposing their enemies. They were perfectly impartial. They made no promise to any political party, and were not bound by any political party. In 1906 they presented what they called a 'Bill of grievances' to the then president, vice-president, and speaker of the House of Representatives, and in it they incorporated eight specific grievances and demands for their rectification. They had a fight for it. One party ignored their demands; the other party adopted them in full; and nearly 7,000,000 voters voted for the party that supported them. They succeeded in getting fourteen trade unionists elected to the House of Representatives, and they formed themselves into a labor group. In this way they secured not only remedial legislation for the evils of which they complained, but constructive legislation in the interests of labor and of the people, and helped to liberalize the government—not in the British sense of liberalism—in its mentality, and soul, and activity. They secured not only relief from the decision of the Supreme Court in what was called the Hatters case, which might be regarded as on a par with the Taff Vale case, but relief from the Trade Union Dispute Act. In addition, there was enacted in the law a section the first sentence of which read: 'The labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce.' The old political economy idea of property in man, property in wealth, property in land—a species of ownership in a man who worked for another—had been abolished so far as the law of the land was concerned and actions in the law courts. It was now laid down that the labor of a human being was inseparable from the human being, and must not be considered as an individual commodity or an article of commerce."

Mr. Gompers' relation to British political activity was illustrated in the next column, where the *Times* carried an account of his "fight to a finish," "one fell blow" address at a luncheon given by the American Luncheon Club, at which "Mr. J. B. McAfee presided, and among those present were Lord Acheson, General Biddle, Vice-Admiral Sims, General Sir Nevil Macready, Mr. W. Brace, M. P., and Mr. Havelock Wilson."

Following which the *Times* carried an appeal for funds by J. Havelock Wilson:

"The General Election appears to be imminent and patriotic labor must mobilize for the fray. The 'Bolshie bosses' control the Labour Party machinery and political funds. They have appealed, and are appealing, for funds. Patriotic labor must also appeal."

Gompers' administration at the annual conventions by such socialist leaders as Victor Berger. Later, French syndicalism had its reflex in the I. W. W. movement under Haywood, who had been active in the Western Federation of Miners and was also a member of the Socialist Party executive. He broke with the latter, which clung to political action as the working class weapon, as against direct action and sabotage; but in his efforts to organize unskilled labor, which in the textile trades, for example, had been left in the lurch by the old-line craft unions, the I. W. W. ran afoul of the American Federation of Labor. When the war came, the American Socialist Party, with its large foreign-born element, did not recede from its position of direct opposition, taken at St. Louis in March, 1917, before war was declared—a position analogous to that of the Independent Social Democrats in Germany, the Italian Official Socialists, the British Socialist Party and the furthest left among the French, in line all of them with the historic international position of the socialist movement.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile the I. W. W. was charged with fomenting strikes and encouraging war sabotage, and hundreds of its leaders were arrested.<sup>2</sup>

Thus it was that Gompers was in a fair way to consolidate his life-long leadership and see his inveterate antagonists cast into outer darkness on the patriotic issue of the war. It was as if he were swinging two dead cats by the tail when a new incarnation of this deplorable cat tribe put its head up over his back-yard fence in the character of the British Labour Party, which could not readily be damned as pro-German because it was altogether British and which to his mind confounded trade unionism with an obnoxious socialism in what it called a reconstruction program. Unrebuffed by the failure of the American Federation of Labor to sit in at its Inter-Allied

<sup>1</sup> While American trade unions, such as the miners, swung service flags with thousands of stars at their annual conventions, the Socialist Party organizations, and especially its leaders of German or Austrian birth or descent, were under government surveillance, and its formidable municipal campaign under the Russian born leader, Morris Hillquit, in New York (November, 1917), had no defenders in the metropolitan press but the Socialist daily, the *Call*, itself often barred from the mails.

<sup>2</sup> Many were later sentenced (September, 1918) to long terms of imprisonment by the Federal Court at Chicago, Haywood among them; while Berger and five other Socialist Party officials were indicted in Chicago. [Convicted Jan. 8, 1918]. Eugene V. Debs, many times Socialist Party candidate for President, and an outspoken critic of the war as a struggle of competing capitalisms, was convicted in a federal court in Ohio under the wartime espionage act—a parallel to the Liebknecht case in Germany. Pro-war socialists like John Spargo and Charles Edward Russell, and pro-war syndicalists like Walling and Frank Bohn, early broke with their old associates and made common cause with the A. F. of L. through the American Alliance of Labor and Democracy.

Conference, it proposed with some of its even more questionable confederates, to send a delegation overseas to confer with the "forces of American democracy" and call on the President. Small wonder that—to put it at its known least—the A. F. of L. made no loud protest at the obstacles which the British government and the Sailors' Union put in the way of the delegation's coming. And apparently so fearful were its leaders of the British virus infecting American trade unionists that they let the hold-up of the delegates from the British Trades Union Congress go by default also.

It should be said that Gompers and the A. F. of L. had a more difficult problem in generating labor unity behind the war than either the British or the French labor leaders. It took three years for the British labor movement to find itself in the matter of a distinctly working-class foreign policy. For those three years, the question of America's entering the European conflict had been debated in the United States and labor men in various parts of the country had actively opposed it. Wilson had been reëlected on the campaign cry, "He kept us out of war"; America was not invaded; the American industrial centers were thronged with immigrant workers; with the example of the Russian revolution, insurgent movements sprang up in the direction of workers' councils. Outspoken espousal of the war—of conscription—of redoubled efforts at production—by the Gompers' leadership was unquestionably a very real factor in swinging industrial America into line with the national purpose when war was declared.

Nonetheless, the same inhibitions and more stood in the way of President Wilson. He became the pioneer of the new statesmanship among the Allied governments, leading them, while Gompers remained the bell-wether of the rear guard in labor statesmanship, holding it back.

Moreover, the opposition to the Gompers' administration in years past had by no means been confined to the socialists or the I. W. W. In a period in which the right to collective bargaining was not yet won, and when such strength as wage-earners could muster was needed for its extension in the economic field, much could be said for his policy of keeping clear of political action.<sup>1</sup> Nobody but could respect the consummate ability with which he had held the conflicting racial, religious and trade groups together throughout the years, built up the organization and fended against

<sup>1</sup>The continuation of this policy in war time and reconstruction has been sharply challenged by the springing up of local labor parties in Bridgeport, Chicago, New York and elsewhere in the fall of 1918—the beginnings of an insurgent political labor movement which may have important consequences on the future both of the A. F. of L. and the American Socialist Party.



attack from within and without. To be sure, long drawn out law suits instigated by the bitterly anti-union National Association of Manufacturers, the American Anti-Boycott Association, etc., actually made his position within the movement invulnerable. So long as he was under fire, with a prison sentence over his head due to the action of hostile employers and reactionary judges, the hands of those progressives within the organization were tied, who wanted to see a more forward-looking policy toward the struggling women's labor movement, toward reforms in trade union procedure comparable to the stirrings toward democracy in American political life, and toward advances in social legislation. The situation had not only played into the continuance in power of a knot of conservative labor officials, but toward their gradual supplanting by others who lacked the old-time ardor and devotion which built up the organization.

The St. Paul convention was, for example, unenthusiastic and thoroughly domesticated. "The American working people," wrote one of the younger labor organizers, "will have to find another leadership before idealism and vision will replace desire for cheap monetary advantage." By so much was expressed discontent with the failure to transmute wartime gains in labor organization and wages, into some constructive outgiving on war aims or social reconstruction. By so much was expressed disillusionment with a leadership which had had only exasperation for the excesses of the Russian Revolution,—which had sought unity at home not by a social appeal, broad and affirmative enough to sweep in the whole gamut of working-class aspiration, but by the downing of old non-conformities,—which had found kinship in time-serving factions abroad whose first concern in the peace was their narrow self-interests. It had let suspicion and partisanship stand between American labor and the great Allied labor and socialist bodies in their strivings to the end that peace should not be needlessly deferred for selfish advantage, to the end that when peace came it should not be in the terminology and spirit of the old settlements which had strapped dynastic establishments and competitive armaments on the backs of the workers.

#### GOMPERS SITS IN WITH ALLIED SOCIALISTS

A distinctive thing in the Allied labor developments reviewed in this book was that just as, at the outset of the war, labor and capital buried their feuds for the sake of united effort in prosecuting the war, so now socialists, syndicalists and trade unionists buried their feuds in the interests of a united working class front on war



aims and procedure. Apparently the returning American mission was so fearsome of socialist dominance after the war that it wanted American labor to balk this unity and reopen and broaden the cleavages among Allied groups while the war was on. Gompers, for the sake of advantage over the socialists after the war, was to lend himself to smashing this unity which had done more than any one thing to keep the Allied working classes firm in resistance to Prussian militarism through the gruelling months of its last great drives.

Whether or not the conception of a joint labor and socialist international, transcending the separate pre-war bodies, and uniting the workers of the world for industrial democracy, persists over the separatist tendencies in after-the-war years, is for the future to decide.<sup>1</sup> But its dual program of military and moral offensive, its vision of a workers' peace, held while the war was on. The forces for coherence were too strong for dismemberment under the guise of a lesser unity. Once on the ground at Derby, among the trade unionists of all England, Gompers got at the truth of the situation and adjusted himself to it. He may have seen that the unity he was booked to destroy was all too precious to destroy. He at least saw that it was proof against disruption.

Two quotations will give the thing in a nutshell. The first is from the anti-administration English *Nation*:

The event of greatest importance at the congress was the speech of Mr. Samuel Gompers as fraternal delegate from the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Gompers' coming had been loudly heralded in the jingo press; we had been told again and again that he had come post-haste from the United States in order to give Mr. Henderson and his friends a trouncing; and all the "intransigent" labor leaders had gone wild with delight at his coming. It is too soon yet to say that their expectations have been disappointed; but it is at least very clear that Mr. Gompers means to feel his way warily. . . . The truth is, of course, that in America Mr. Gompers had been regularly fed with lies about the labor movement in this country. Probably he arrived in this country under the impression, which is so sedulously fostered by the enemies of labor, that a few wire-pullers had captured the official organization of the Labour Party, and that, at a word from his magic voice, the trade unions would flock to the standard of Mr. Appleton, Mr. Havelock Wilson, and, incidentally, Mr. Lloyd George. If so, his first day's experience at congress, before he was called upon to speak, must have given

<sup>1</sup> The first test came in the International Labor and Socialist Conference convened as result of the labors of Huysmans and Henderson, at Berne in mid-February, 1919. (Simultaneously an international trade union congress was held there.) Ninety elected delegates from 25 nationalities were represented; and labor achieved its long advocated working-class gathering concurrent with the Peace Conference at Versailles.

him a rapid awakening; for he could hardly have helped realizing that the preponderant feeling at congress was decisively for the Labour Party and against Mr. Havelock Wilson and his friends. His experiences at Derby may have done Mr. Gompers a world of good. . . .

The second is from the pro-administration London *Times*:

Mr. Gompers telegraphed in identical terms on August 7 to Mr. Appleton, M. Jouhaux (secretary of the Confédération Générale du Travail and head of the International Trade Union Secretariat), and to Mr. C. W. Bowerman, M.P. (secretary of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress), stating that if an inter-allied conference of *bona-fide* labor representatives were convened in London about September 17, he and other delegates from the American Federation of Labor would attend. Mr. Appleton and M. Jouhaux thereupon began to make preparations for an Inter-Allied Trade Union Conference in Paris next week. Simultaneously, Mr. Bowerman and Mr. Henderson, and the other members of the Joint Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party, arranged for an Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference to be held in London on September 17, 18, and 19. Mr. Gompers was notified of these arrangements, and replied that the Federation delegates would attend the London meeting.

Before he left America Mr. Gompers denied a report that he was going to a joint labor and socialist conference. Socialism, he said, would have no place in the deliberations of the American delegates. We have, therefore, a situation in which Mr. Gompers and his colleagues have committed themselves, in spite of this denial, to participation in a conference which will be at least as representative of socialism as of *bona-fide* trade unionism. Mr. Gompers, no doubt, was conscious of the somewhat anomalous position in which he found himself when he met the Joint Committee of the Trades Union Congress (a purely trade union body), and the Labour Party (a mixture of socialist and trade union organizations) at a private meeting in Derby last week. This may explain a certain lack of incisiveness and confidence which was noticeable in his address to the Congress.

British, French, Italian, Belgian, Serbian, American and Greek delegates were in attendance at the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference,<sup>1</sup> which opened September 18, 1918, with G. H.

<sup>1</sup>In response to a request from Gompers, a statement was issued showing the composition of the Conference to be as follows:

GREAT BRITAIN.—Labour Party (2,500,000 members), 24 delegates. Trades Union Congress (4,130,000 members), 18 delegates.

FRANCE.—Socialist Party (70,000 members, 100 Parliamentary deputies out of 600; 1,500,000 votes at 1914 election), six delegates. Confédération Générale du Travail (800,000 members), six delegates.

ITALY.—Socialist Union (12,000 members), three delegates. Union of

Stuart-Bunning, the newly elected chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, presiding. Stuart-Bunning is secretary of the Postmen's Federation and one of the delegates from the February conference whose sailing to America to "confer with the forces of democracy" was frustrated. What his undelivered message would have been was indicated by a passage in his opening address, in which he espoused a League of Nations and paid respect to the American President, who, with his colleagues, had brought into our international affairs a new life, a new breath of humanity, one of those breaths which vivify all that we do and which give us some hope for the regeneration of the world.

Labor (160,000 members), one delegate. Irredentist Social Democrats, five consultative delegates.

BELGIUM.—Socialist Party (350,000 members), six delegates. Union of Workers in France, two delegates.

UNITED STATES.—Federation of Labor (3,000,000 members), five delegates.

CANADA.—Trades and Labour Congress, one delegate.

GREECE.—General Labor Federation of Piræus (60,000 members), one delegate.

SERBIA.—Socialist Party (25,000 members), one delegate.

RUMANIA.—National Committee, two consultative delegates.

RUSSIA.—Social Revolutionary Party, four consultative delegates (absent). Social Democratic Party, one consultative delegate (absent).

Total, 74 full delegates and 12 consultative delegates (five absent).

As the five delegates from the Democrazia Sociale Irredenta represented a section which since the war had been identified with the Allies, but were normally Austrian subjects, they were admitted as consultative delegates. In a sense they were an extreme manifestation of that distinction between peoples and governments which was the basis of Allied labour's willingness to go into a consultative conference. Incidentally, to this limited extent, the American delegates were sitting in with "enemy labor"! The classing with them of the Russian Social Revolutionary Party delegates (who had been delayed en route) provoked much discussion, hanging on whether Russia was or was not still one of the Allies. Kerensky was admitted as a "guest." The difficulties of reconciling the extremes of the working class movement were illustrated by the absence of the Official Socialist Party of Italy, which thus registered its opinion of a conference to which the American Federation of Labor was admitted and the American Socialist Party excluded. The stand-off attitude of the A. F. of L. since the February meeting was thus matched by that of the far left. Nor were the Italians alone. Both French sections, trade union as well as socialist, placed on record their regret that the American Socialist Party was not invited, and Jean Longuet held that its votes "should not be given to the American Federation of Labor." This brought the retort from Gompers: "The American Federation of Labor represents the American labor movement, and yields not an inch to any other body, no matter under what name they may sail. The American Federation of Labor in itself is an affiliation of the trade union movement with more than three millions of members, wage-earners, and none but wage-earners. It is the working-class movement of America."

It was the duty of labor, he said, to explore any and every possible avenue to an honorable and lasting peace, and went on:—

Accusations have been made against the promoters of the document known as the war aims memorandum that they were defeatists. Such accusations could only be made either out of crass ignorance or sheer malevolence, because the most cursory examination of that document will show that conditions are laid down with which the Central Powers must comply, and unless they do comply we are willing to go on fighting to the bitter end.

On behalf of the committee on procedure (Sidney Webb reporting), first place in the proceedings of the conference was given to the proposals of the American delegates.

With C. L. Baine of the A. F. of L. in the chair, the American labor statement was put before the conference at its second session:

We recognize in this world war the inevitable conflict between autocratic and democratic institutions: the contest between the principles of self-development through free institutions and that of arbitrary control of government by groups or individuals for selfish ends. It is therefore essential that the peoples and the governments of all countries should have a full and definite knowledge of the spirit and determination of this inter-Allied conference, representative of the workers of our respective countries, with reference to the prosecution of the war.

We declare it to be our unqualified determination to do all that lies within our power to assist our allied countries in the marshaling of all of their resources to the end that the armed forces of the Central Powers may be driven from the soil of the nations which they have invaded and now occupy; and, furthermore, that these armed forces shall be opposed so long as they carry out the orders or respond to the control of the militaristic autocratic governments of the Central Powers which now threaten the existence of all self-governing people.

This conference endorses the 14 points laid down by President Wilson as conditions upon which peace between the belligerent nations may be established and maintained.

The statement set out the 14 points, and continued:

The world is requiring tremendous sacrifices of all the peoples. Because of their response in defense of principles of freedom the peoples have earned the right to wipe out all vestiges of the old idea that the government belongs to or constitutes a "governing class." In determining issues that will vitally affect the lives and welfare of millions of wage-earners justice requires that they should have direct representation in the agencies authorized to make such decisions. We therefore declare that—



In the official delegations from each of the belligerent countries which will formulate the peace treaty the workers should have direct official representation.

We declare in favor of a World Labor Congress to be held at the same time and place as the Peace Conference that will formulate the peace treaty closing the war.

We declare that the following essentially fundamental principles must underlie the peace treaty:—

A league of the free peoples of the world in a common covenant for genuine and practical coöperation to secure justice and therefore peace in relations between nations.

No political or economic restrictions meant to benefit some nations and to cripple or embarrass others.

No indemnities or reprisals based upon vindictive purposes, or deliberate desire to injure, but to right manifest wrongs.

Recognition of the rights of small nations and of the principle "No people must be forced under sovereignty under which it does not wish to live."

No territorial changes or adjustment of power except in furtherance of the welfare of the peoples affected and in furtherance of world peace.

In addition to these basic principles there should be incorporated in the treaty which shall constitute the guide of nations in the new period and conditions into which we enter at the close of the war, the following declarations fundamental to the best interests of all nations and of vital importance to wage-earners:—

That in law and in practice the principle shall be recognized that the labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce.

Involuntary servitude shall not exist except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.

The right of free association, free assemblage, free speech, and free press shall not be abridged.

That the seamen of the merchant marine shall be guaranteed the right of leaving their vessels when the same are in safe harbor.

No article or commodity shall be shipped or delivered in international commerce in the production of which children under the age of 16 years have been employed or permitted to work.

It shall be declared that the basic workday in industry and commerce shall not exceed eight hours per day.

Trial by jury should be established.

#### THE INTER-BELLIGERENT ISSUE

The week before the conference, Gompers had stated in a public interview that there had been no recession from the position taken by the American Federation of Labor; it was as much committed as

he was "not to meet the representatives of enemy *countries*<sup>1</sup> until the war had been won and that applies whether the meeting is at Stockholm, Berne, or Timbuctoo." It will be seen that none of these interesting geographical localities was referred to in the American statement which made no mention of an inter-belligerent war-time labor conference.

By apparently an amicable division of labor, that topic was left to the British delegation which presented a joint report of the Labour Party executive and the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, reviewing the replies which had been received to date from labor groups in the Central Empires. The failure of the German Majority Socialists to accept the London proposals as basis for discussion, or even the proposals which the Stockholm neutral committee had put out a year before, had created, said the report, "an obstacle to the holding of an international conference."

Both statements were referred to a committee on war aims. The inter-belligerent conference, not at this time a matter for immediate decision, was clearly not to stand in the way of unanimity on the great democratic issues imbedded in the war aims or on those two elements in procedure—labor representation at the peace settlement and a concurrent labor conference—which had been proposed by the American Federation of Labor in the earlier years of the war and had been accepted by the Allied labor and socialist bodies at London in February, 1918.

But it must not be presumed that the inter-belligerent conference project was therefore abandoned. Quite the contrary, in spite of the mortuarial anticipations of the British right. The labor correspondent of the London *Times*, writing the day before the conference opened, had visualized Gompers as chief undertaker:—

The American Federation, which stands for 3,500,000 trade unionists, will have nothing to do with any conference at which German Socialists are present until either they have freed themselves from the Kaiser's vassalage, or Kaiserism has been destroyed by the military power of the allies. That resolve, it can be stated, is shared . . . [by] . . . such men as Mr. Will Thorne, M.P., Mr. J. Sexton, Mr. Havelock Wilson, Mr. T. Richards, M. P., and other trade unionists, who will be present as members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Congress or of the Labour Party Executive. . . . Between these leaders and the American delegates there is little or no gap.

But there will be other parties represented at the conference who have nothing in common with American labor, [who] . . . will con-

<sup>1</sup> Enemy labor (?): it was apparently part of the tactics of the opposition to blur the distinction in the public mind.

front Mr. Gompers. They stand for "peace by negotiation," and they are ready to begin the negotiation at once. . . . "Stockholm" was never more remote than it is to-day, even without the intervention of American labor. But to-morrow, when Mr. Gompers and his comrades have thrown the full weight of their Federation against the project, it will be still more remote, for an International Socialist Congress from which American labor was absent would be utterly futile. . . .

The *Times* correspondent, after the manner of most of the press on both side of the Atlantic, was focusing attention on the extreme right and the extreme left in the labor movement and utterly disregarding the consistent course held to by the British majority (to the left of center) and held to by the great body of the Allied labor leadership. Two days later, in the midst of a debate which the *Times* correspondent thought was not so much a memorial service as an "Irish wake," J. Sexton (right) offered a resolution which was read by Henderson and translated to the amusement of the foreign delegates:

That this conference, recognizing that the Kaiser and his advisers were initially responsible for the present world-war, and the devastation, ruthless murders, and infamous inhumanity practiced by Germany, insists that there shall be no peace or even talk of peace until the Kaiser and his associates and all who agree with him are hanged from the lamp-post without judge or jury.

Sexton meant his resolution as a satire on the catholicity of the conference in entertaining resolutions from individual delegates (which the extreme left had taken advantage of for publicity purposes), but he was unwittingly reducing to an absurdity the position of the extreme right.

*The extreme left* was prepared to go into conference with German and Austrian labor and socialist groups without preliminaries, in the belief that the very differences which separated them were due to isolation across the iron walls of the war, that to meet was the way to clear these up, and that to delay was to play into the hands of capitalistic forces on both sides which wanted a peace of conquest. Had the rank and file of Allied labor become convinced that the deliberate procedure of the majority group was to be indefinitely thwarted by hostile government forces, there was likelihood that the left would take the bit in its teeth. It is not unthinkable that the British government recognized this, and called Gompers off from swinging the movement too far to the left in a mistaken notion that he could down Henderson and swing it back to the right.

*The extreme right*, on the other hand, and with it American

labor, persisted in setting up hurdles like Sexton's lamp-post in the way of a meeting of workers' representatives on neutral soil, demanding that the German armies must first be withdrawn and the Imperial government overthrown.

*The British majority*, now no less than in those first months described in earlier chapters, recognized that as a practical matter the control of the invading armies was in the hands of the German general staff. They still held that, while the Allied armies kept hammering at the Western front, an inter-belligerent labor conference—which would clear up any overhanging misapprehensions and would carry conviction as to their own determination to curb any counter schemes of conquest—might give the German working class the leverage it needed to topple over the Pan-Germanic régime. And they still put as prerequisite, a convincing acceptance of the basic democratic principles at stake, not by the German authorities but by the German working class organizations. They were as clearly set as President Wilson against a peace "obtained by any kind of compromise or abatement of the principles we have avowed as the principles for which we are fighting." And in this their procedure was not at variance with the prime distinction made by the American President when that week he promptly turned down the Austrian peace note suggesting a secret conference (without a preliminary show of hands) and when, a short month later, he transmitted the subsequent German offer which accepted his basic 14 points.

The British and Allied majority held to their even course at this September conference in spite of tugging from the two extremes. The first cleavages came not over general war aims or procedure but on the choice between enunciating distinct labor policies toward current issues in foreign affairs or accepting government policies whole. This was on the third day of the conference, when the American labor leaders sat under the chairmanship of another of the inter-Allied delegates, the frustration of whose trip to America had gone unprotested by the A. F. of L.—Cachin, a moderate of the French Socialist Party.

One occasion was a resolution on the Austrian note which Gompers regarded as critical of the British government. While voting for it, he protested against indirect reflections on any of the Allied governments. He lamented the difficulty of getting the American labor point of view before the attention of their fellow workers in other countries, but added:—"We are behind our government 100 per cent, and behind the Allies whatever may betide." Thomas of France (himself a former member of ministries) whimsically rejoined that "it was an old habit and perhaps not a bad one, of the socialists of Western Europe to give their governments hints and



pushes now and then." While making a great point of getting Allied labor to subscribe to Wilson's 14 points, the American labor leader had placed himself in the position of resisting the efforts of Allied labor to bring their own governments publicly into line with the American President on those same points.<sup>1</sup>

#### LABOR AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The issue next to come up was a resolution on Russia which bore the signatures of Huysmans and Vandervelde (Belgium), Longuet and Renaudel (France), Henderson and J. Hill (Great Britain), Rossoni and Rosetti (Italy), and Popovitch (Serbia):—

(1) This conference sends an expression of deepest sympathy to the labor and socialist organizations of Russia, which, after having destroyed their own Imperialism, continue an unremitting struggle against German Imperialism.

(2) It declares that if the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk stands, it would confirm the collapse of the Russian Revolution, and would most gravely compromise the future of the democracy of the world. It invites the workers of the allied countries to refuse to recognize any peace settlement which does not secure the complete freedom of the Russian people.

(3) On the other hand, it puts the workers of the allied countries on their guard against the tremendous dangers of a policy of intervention in Russia which, instead of supporting the efforts of democratic Russia, should favor the reactionary tendencies that aim at the reestablishment of the monarchy, and even, under the pretext of fighting Bolshevism, should serve the reaction against Socialism and Democracy. It declares in advance that to such a policy the working classes of the Western democracies would have the elementary duty of offering opposition without stint.

There was a minority resolution, bearing the signatures of Baine and Wallace (America), which was identical with the majority proposal as to the first two paragraphs, but differed from it in the third, which ran as follows:—

(3) It is of opinion that the Allied governments should make very explicit pronouncements to the peoples of Russia to the effect that armed intervention is taking place with the hope of counteracting the sinister influence of the Central Powers upon the so-called Bolshevik Government, which has suppressed the utterances and the aspirations of the great majority of the Russian working classes; and that no military successes whatever shall be made the excuse for arresting

<sup>1</sup>See page 321.

the march of the peoples of Russia towards true democracy. It looks to the Allied Governments to give tangible proof of the sincerity of such declarations by their actions in the occupied districts of Russia.

Henderson, in moving the majority resolution, said there was a feeling in the committee that they had not sufficient evidence to justify an emphatic declaration either for or against the present intervention by the Allied Governments in Russia. They therefore merely warned the workers of the Allied countries against what might be the consequences of that intervention.

Jean Longuet said the majority of the French Socialist Party and part of the delegation from the Confédération Générale du Travail had abandoned their own resolution (a resolution of unqualified condemnation of Allied intervention) and supported the majority resolution now submitted, which was originally presented by M. Vandervelde. They supported it, however, because they understood that it expressed sympathy with all the socialist and revolutionary parties in Russia, including the Bolsheviks, who, he said, had only accepted the abominable Brest-Litovsk Treaty because they were compelled by force of arms. They supported the resolution also because they considered that the Allied intervention was contrary to the principles of international socialism and to the claim that peoples should determine their own future. Vandervelde, on the other hand, asserted that if Longuet's interpretation held, he would be compelled to abandon his own text, and adopt that of the American delegation.

Eventually resolutions and amendments were referred back to the committee, but first the conference agreed that Kerensky should be heard. Here again we can quote from the extended report of his speech in the London *Times*:

"The part which Russia has played in the common cause of our alliance can never be struck out of the general balance-sheet of national sacrifices. In the first years of the war, when the British Empire was still organizing its army, the Russian army stood between Europe and collapse, sacrificing millions of its best men. Revolutionary Russia, so despised at this moment by the victorious Governments, concentrated on its front during the summer of last year the largest number of German troops that had been there from the beginning of the war. This effort of revolutionary Russia allowed the United States, which entered the war after the Russian revolution, to get ready for the combat to such an extent that all the calculations of the German General Staff were overthrown. The basis of the Allied victory has been watered with Russian blood too abundantly for any one to entertain the idea, not very generous anyhow, of profiting by the crime of the Bolsheviks against Russia, to the detriment of the interests of Russia. . . .

"Under new forms the war, the unorganized struggle of the Russian people against the implacable enemy, has been continued without ceasing. You Westerners only hear distant echoes of this violent struggle, such as the news of the peasant rising in the Ukraine, of the heroic attempt on the life of the Ambassador of Germany, and of the revolts in Moscow and Petrograd. What you remain ignorant of is the enormous work of organization which was accomplished by the Russian democracy—socialists, Liberal parties, intellectuals, officers, and, above all, working-class and peasant organizations—amid the terrible conditions of the Bolshevik *régime*. To-day you are beginning to see the result of this long work. . . ."

After repudiating the suggestion in the resolution originally put forward by Longuet, and now abandoned, that the allied intervention had been called for by the capitalist *bourgeoisie* of Russia, and observing that it was hypocrisy for the Socialists of a country whose territory was being defended by armies from five different countries to protest against sending military aid to any other country, Kerensky declared that the Union for the Regeneration of Russia—a coalition of the democratic and Liberal parties in Russia—could not have refrained from taking the responsibility of calling in the aid of allied troops. The Union, he said, was seeking to restore the Russian front, and also to restore the Russian State as a single State with a central power. . . .

The tone of alarm in the resolution before the Conference corresponded exactly with the truth. The danger was to be found in the tendency of certain men of great influence in the governments to maintain in Russia certain isolated persons and private organizations which desired to seize power in Russia by the Bolshevik method of violence. While a kind of anti-democratic government might succeed for a time in Russia, with the help of foreign military force, it could only be maintained as the Bolshevik tyranny was maintained—by bayonet. The representatives of the Allies in Russia ought to receive a categorical instruction from their Governments to give up every kind of political relation with separate people and private organizations and to act strictly in accord with the existing democratic governments to which he had referred. "I was," added M. Kerensky, "and I remain, in favor of intervention, because I am persuaded that the democratic forces of the allies must come to the aid of the democratic forces of the Russian people in order to insure their safety." (Cheers.)

The following morning, Henderson reported for the committee on the international situation, repeating the first two paragraphs of the Russian resolution and substituting a third to take the place of the conflicting proposals submitted the previous day:

(3) The conference is of opinion that, in conformity with Article 6 of the "14 points" of President Wilson, the present effort of the Allied governments to assist the Russian people must be influenced

only by a genuine desire to preserve liberty and democracy in an ordered and durable world-peace, by which the beneficent fruits of the revolution shall be made permanently secure.

#### SQUELCHING THE EXTREME LEFT

The new paragraph was adopted by a large majority, the debate being closed over the protest of Longuet, Mrs. Philip Snowden and others of the British left.<sup>1</sup> The conference referred to its permanent bureau the cabled appeal of the Russian Social Revolutionary Party for a committee of Allied socialists to visit Russia and bear witness to the situation.

There followed a statement from the conference's War Aims Committee which was in a sense a merger of the declarations made on the opening day by the American and British delegations. The three first paragraphs, as moved by J. P. Frey [A. F. of L.] provoked a clash between the two extremes. They read:

The conference welcomes the participation of the American Federation of Labor, and recognizes, in agreement with the Federation, in this world-war a conflict between autocratic and democratic institutions, a contest between the opportunities of self-development from free institutions and that of arbitrary control of government by groups or individuals for selfish ends.

The conference agrees that after four years of war it is essential that the peoples and the governments of all countries should have a full and definite knowledge of the spirit and determination of this Inter-Allied Conference, representative of the workers of the respective countries, with reference to the prosecution of the war.

In accordance with the declaration of the previous conference of February, 1918, the conference declares it to be its unqualified determination to do all that lies in its power to assist the allied countries in the marshaling of all their resources to the end that the armed forces of the Central Powers may be driven off the soils of the nations which they have invaded and now occupy, and, furthermore, that these armed forces shall be opposed so long as they carry out the orders or respond to the control of the militaristic and autocratic governments of the Central Powers, which now threaten the existence of all self-governing peoples.

J. W. Kneeshaw, an I.L.P. member of the British Labour Party executive, denied that the war was a fight between autocracy and

<sup>1</sup> With the close of hostilities in the West, the British Labour Party in November, 1918, in a pre-election manifesto warned "the coalition government against opposing the new European democracies" and demanded "the immediate withdrawal of Allied forces from Russia." By the end of the year (1918) the full weight of British labor agitation was directed toward this end.



democracy.<sup>1</sup> The British people were told in 1914 that they went into the war to defend Belgium against German aggression, and for four years they had supported the war in that belief. But, he charged that on August 5, 1918, for the first time Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons that Britain went to war because of a secret compact with France. "Even now," said Kneeshaw,

we do not know what the war is about. You say the Central Powers must withdraw from occupied territories, but surely it is equally wicked for us to occupy Persia, Mesopotamia, and other territories. You call on the German armies to cease to obey orders. That condition would lead to an indefinite prolongation of the war. As a matter of fact, the secret treaties make it quite clear that the purpose of the Allied governments in the war is precisely the same in character as the purpose of the governments of Central Powers—to secure an extension of imperialistic power.

J. Maxton, a fellow member of the I.L.P. on the Labour Party executive, supported him and charged

the American delegation with being two and a half years late in fighting for their principles, and reminded them that, for all their boasted free institutions, Comrades Debs and Mooney were now in American jails.

In reply, Frey warmly defended the belief of American labor that the allies were fighting for democracy against autocracy, and Gompers, who is an old hand at heckling debate, also had back at Kneeshaw and Maxton. To quote the *London Times*:

These ultra-goody-goody men, I trust them not. (Cheers and laughter.) The American Federation, Mr. Gompers went on, had asked for a new trial for Mooney, who was charged with killing 22 people by a bomb, but they had no sympathy for Debs and his associates, who conspired to thwart the American war effort. It was absurd to say that there was no difference between the democratic institutions of the Allies and the German rule.

Mr. KNEESHAW:—I did not say the words you are now putting into my mouth.

Mr. GOMPERS retorted:—Believe me, if it were in my power, I would not put "words" into the delegate's mouth. (Some laughter.) I wonder what the consequence would be to the democracies of Great Britain, France, and the United States if it were possible for Germany to win the war. (Cheers.) . . . We of the American labor

<sup>1</sup>"Yet this war with its terrific toll of human lives is the product of artificial conditions and policies and is repugnant to the thought and political progress of the age. . . ." From the report of the Executive Council, American Federation of Labor, Philadelphia, Nov. 9-21, 1914.

movement have the direct mandate of our people, and we are going through. (Cheers.)

J. Sexton (right) of the British Trades Union Congress denounced Kneeshaw's speech as "treacherous" and declared that it

was the essence of hypocrisy for a member of the party which promoted the Leeds convention for the establishment of soviets in England to object to a suggestion that German soldiers should rebel against their Government.

But the majority leaders had not left it to the American delegation, or to the British right to deal with this outburst from the left. Sidney Webb assured the conference that the majority of the British delegation were in absolute disagreement with almost everything that Kneeshaw said. J. H. Thomas declared that whatever might be said about governments, the government of Great Britain was the reflex of the intelligence of the people; and that was not the case in Germany. "The fact that we were not prepared for war proved that our intentions were not those of Germany." Nor were the British alone. Albert Thomas of the French Socialist Party said that

whatever documents had been published in the last four years, the French workers still found intact the justification of their fight for justice, independence, and freedom.

Remembering the deep anxiety which was felt at the time by the French Government and people when they thought there was no support coming to them, and reading the documents which had since been published, he would assert without hesitation that until Great Britain actually entered the war there was no promise whatever that she would take sides. It was only after the invasion of Belgium had begun that the British Government made up their minds to enter the struggle.

It is one of the principles of the British labor movement not to sacrifice unity for uniformity. It goes with the Englishman's instinct for personal liberty. To those whose test of British labor sentiment would lie in an owlsh conformity by a row of delegates, the incident might have been an exhibit of hopeless discord. Rather, it revealed the reserve powers for coherence among free men.

The British labor men were not so naïve as the Americans about the fundamental economic and nationalistic factors that entered into the war. They could see the woods of modern Europe—and could subscribe to the war as one of "free institutions" against "the arbitrary control of government by groups or individuals for selfish ends"; but they also knew the trees of modern Europe, and the

whole challenge of their labor offensive was to see to it that the war, in the self-controlled terms of its settlement, should ring true to the aspiration of the common men who were fighting it.

The third paragraph of the three quoted—made much of by those who had from the first misconstrued the British labor offensive—was lifted all but bodily from the American statement but linked it properly with the Allied statements of the Februaries (1915 and 1918). It put the resistant edge on the Allied labor blade. There were two things for which British labor will fight to the last ditch, said J. H. Thomas to Hamilton Holt of the League to Enforce Peace, on a visit to England in mid-summer: one to prevent an imperialistic peace, the other to create a league of nations. "The war has lasted for four years," wrote the *New Statesman* in September, "but the disaster of its continuation is as nothing compared with the disaster of ending it before its roots have been torn up and the objects for which we have been fighting achieved."

But while Allied labor was prepared to do all that lay in its power to sustain the Allied countries in the marshaling of all their resources to the end of throwing back invasion and throwing over Prussian militarism, it did not propose to hold up its war aims labor offensive until these ends were secured by the military weapon. It proposed to use the other edge of its blade to the same ends—and with ever its democratic goal in view.

On the vote, no hand was raised against the three passages: the I.L.P. group and their French and Serbian sympathizers of the left alone abstaining from voting.

Unanimous assent was given to paragraphs endorsing the 14 propositions of President Wilson, as in harmony with the Allied Labour declaration of February, 1918; and to paragraphs endorsing in the main the distinctly industrial planks of the A. F. of L. statement, as again in harmony with the February memorandum. Re-subscription to the American proposals as to labor's participation at the peace settlement were combined with these matters, and this part of the statement as adopted read:

The Conference further welcomes the confirmation in all essential features which the fourteen propositions laid down by President Wilson, and presented to the Conference by the American Federation of Labor, give to the proposals contained in the Memorandum on War Aims agreed to by the Conference of the 24th February, 1918. The Conference accepts these fourteen propositions as a concise summary of the main principles which the Memorandum on War Aims expounds in detail on the various questions to be dealt with, and agrees that only in these principles can the groundwork for a lasting peace be found.

The Conference accordingly calls upon the several governments of the allied nations unequivocally to adopt these principles, as formulated by President Wilson and expounded in the Memorandum on War Aims, in a joint declaration of allied policy, and the Conference recommends the representative organizations of the workers in each country to bring pressure to bear upon the Government in order to induce it to adopt this course.

The Conference once more takes note of the tremendous sacrifices which the world is requiring from the mass of the people in each country. It declares that because of their response in defense of principles of freedom the peoples have earned the right to wipe out all vestiges of the old idea that the government belongs to or constitutes a "governing class." In determining issues that will vitally affect the lives and welfare of millions of wage-earners, justice requires that they should have direct representation on the agencies authorized to make such decisions. The Conference therefore declares that—

1. In the official delegations from each of the belligerent countries which will formulate the peace treaty the workers should have direct official representation.<sup>1</sup>

2. A world labor congress shall be held at the same time and place as the peace conference that will formulate the peace treaty closing the war.<sup>2</sup>

The Conference further welcomes the declaration by the American Federation of Labor of the fundamental principles to be included in the peace treaty, as being in substantial agreement with those applied in detail in the Memorandum on War Aims of 20th-24th February appended hereto, and also with the fourteen propositions of President Wilson.

The Conference further expresses its general sympathy with the aspirations of the American Federation of Labor. The Conference places special importance on the proposals which provide for an advanced conception of the right of the worker to complete self-control, and for the unabridged freedom of association and expression.

The Conference declares its objection to all treaties and agreements purporting to bind nations, which have been or may be concluded by their governments without immediate publicity and without Parliamentary authority or ratification; and protests against the

<sup>1</sup>Vandervelde (Belgium) was perhaps the only one of the Allied labor or socialist leaders to be included in the main official delegations as such; for Barnes, a member of the British delegation, had resigned from the Labour Party; Bissolati (Italian Reformist) resigned from the Italian Cabinet as a protest against its failure to renounce the secret treaties; and Gompers was not named. He was appointed, however, with several others, to the commission entrusted with drafting the international labor convention to enter into the peace treaty, and was chosen its chairman.

<sup>2</sup>Held at Berne, February, 1919. See page 285.



continuation for a single day of the present war for the purpose of obtaining any objects aimed at by any of the secret treaties or agreements which are not in accord with the fourteen propositions of President Wilson or the Memorandum on War Aims.

Next came the passages lifted from the statement of the British delegation summing up the results of the 'diplomacy of democracy':

The Conference, taking note of the declarations and replies made to the Memorandum on War Aims of 20th-24th February by the labor and Socialist movements of the several countries in alliance with the Central Powers,

1. Expresses its satisfaction with the replies of the Bulgarian and Hungarian Socialist, and the German Social Democratic party of Austria, in so far as they accept the decisions of the London Conference as the basis of discussion at an international meeting; and

2. Expresses its deep regret that the reply of the German Majority—though their published letter expresses their willingness to attend an international—does not accept the London proposals, and fails officially to accept even the neutrals' proposals as a basis of discussion. So long as these points remain unanswered they create an obstacle to the holding of an international conference.

The Conference directs that the commission to be appointed for this purpose shall, as soon as may be possible, draft and forward replies through the press and other channels to the labor and Socialist parties whose replies indicate a willingness to discuss the situation on the agreed basis, pointing out that the difficulty in the way of an immediate international meeting is that the German response does not fulfill the conditions laid down by the Conference of 20th-24th February, and urging them to use their influence to get the German attitude changed, and also to send a considered reply to the German Majority. . . .

Here again the majority leadership was in for an attack from the French left. Longuet protested emphatically against the phrase that the non-acceptance of the London memorandum by the German majority was an obstacle to the holding of an international conference. He favored an unconditional meeting with German labor, stating that France had already 1,700,000 dead, and that protraction of the war meant extermination. But on the vote to change the wording from "obstacle" to "difficulty," only twenty-five votes were registered for the change. To quote the *London Times*:

Mr. Henderson said the memorandum demanded reparation for Belgium. Would M. Longuet show them a single word from the German Government or the Majority Socialists accepting that condition? Had the condition been fulfilled in regard to Alsace-Lorraine, which they decided was a question not of territorial adjustment, but of right? M. Longuet wanted an unconditional conference. He

could have it, but he would have it without British labor. (Cheers.) British labor was not going to defend German Socialism and sacrifice world democracy. They declared on February 14, 1915, and at every conference they had held since, that a victory for Germany would mean the destruction of democracy and the annihilation of liberty.

#### GOMPERS GOES DOWN WITH THE EXTREME RIGHT

It was then that the attack shifted to the extreme right; and Gompers struck at that element in the Allied labor procedure which he had opposed throughout the year. He moved an amendment:

That we will meet in conference with those only of the Central Powers who are in open revolt against their autocratic governments.

Again to quote the London *Times*:

He said he hoped to live to see the day when the workmen of all nations would refuse not only to take up arms, but to manufacture them, and by this means make war impossible. (Cheers.) He had not lost faith in the *Internationale*, but to end the struggle now would mean the breaking out of a new war as soon as the autocratic governments could get their machinery to work again.

Gompers was voted down, as decisively as had been Longuet, 63 to 26 (the Canadians and Italian Trade Unionists voting with the A. F. of L. delegation). The majority of 63 included the full British, French, Belgian, Serbian and Greek delegations and three votes cast by the Italian Socialists. W. J. Bowen announced that if another conference were held during the war to which delegates from enemy countries were to be admitted the representatives of the A. F. of L. would not take part. However, the American Federation agreed to be represented in the new bureau appointed by the conference to carry out its policy and to draft replies to the parties of the Central Powers.

The touchstone of the whole inter-belligerent conference procedure had been the old question of passports, which dated back to the initial refusal of the governments at the time of the Stockholm meetings. Not only had the Inter-Allied Conference in February been balked in sending delegates to America, and later the British Trades Union Congress; but Henderson and Bowerman had been held up in going to France, and the Dutch Socialist Troelstra had been prevented from coming to England in June to report to the Allied labor leaders on the position of the German Socialists toward the war aims memorandum. In these things, Havelock Wilson and the Sailors' Union had been partners to the obstruction. Official

copies of Allied labor's war aims memorandum had been held up in transit by both the British and the German governments. The Derby Trades Union Congress had passed a vigorous protest as to passports and the French Confederation had gone further and threatened strike action if labor were continually thwarted. The American delegates abstaining, the inter-Allied conference adopted the following, 57 to 10—

The conference, in view of the refusal of the governments to afford passport facilities to the properly elected representatives of organized labor, condemns the policy of the governments, and declares that the continuance of such policy is bound to lead to an acceptance of the government's challenge by the organized labor movement.

The conference warns the governments that the patience of the organized working people is rapidly becoming exhausted by the continued affronts which are thus offered.

The resolutions were carried paragraph by paragraph throughout, voting being by nationality, the American, British and French delegates being allotted 20 votes, the allotments to other delegations being proportionately smaller. The conference reached virtually unanimous decisions, Allied and American joined, upon (1) the Austrian peace proposals, (2) Russian intervention and (3) war aims.

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It was a saying of Poor Richard that if one "would have a thing well done, go; if not, send." In the winter and spring of 1918, Gompers sent, and the information brought back by the American labor delegation which visited England at the expense of the British government, was of a distorted sort, both in fact and in prophecy. Their chairman described Henderson and his group as weak-kneed in the war and political parasites and what not. The efforts of the American labor mission to wean them from heresy failed; the group of pro-war Socialists posted off to try their hand, but with very similar results and very similar prophecies.

Then Gompers himself went.

If, as it was freely circulated in the American press, his mission was to bring back Henderson's head on a platter,—if his coming was to set up a trade union rival to the British Labour Party, split off from it the great Trades Union Congress in their joint war-aims program, and set up a purely trade union inter-Allied body to take the place of the inter-Allied Socialist and Labour Conference—if these things were the purposes of his trip (as they were the subject of the confident prophecies), it was a complete failure. In the

last chapter we saw how these separatist movements fizzled. Gompers brought home two old silver plates, the gift of British labor, but Henderson's head was on neither.

But in a larger and finer sense, Gompers' trip was a success. A convinced opponent to socialism and to political action, he is, none the less, out of a lifetime's experience in adjusting difficulties between labor bodies, used to dealing with organized realities. And the British labor movement is an organized reality. Gompers was big enough to deal with it as it is and not as it had been painted. At the American-Allied meeting, New World labor joined with Old in reaffirming opposition in the field to Prussian militarism. Old World labor joined with New in reaffirming belief in President Wilson's statement. New World labor joined with Old in subscribing to the Allied labor war aims. Old World labor subscribed to the industrial charter offered by the American Federation of Labor. Old and new united in reaffirming the American labor proposals as to labor representation at the time of settlement. When it came to the issue of the inter-belligerent conference, the two parted and went their ways.

That question, after all, was one of tactics—tactics which were rendered out of date within a month by governmental exchanges across the war that were as bitterly attacked in some quarters as labor's attempts had been; but tactics whose influence in provoking democratic risings among the German and Austrian and Bulgarian workers only the future historian will be able adequately to appraise. Once on the ground, Gompers split with British labor on the subject of tactics, but joined with it on the broad program for an unimperialistic peace which was common to both and to the American President. Said Gompers on the floor at the American-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London, September, 1918:

It has been said in Germany that I came to Europe to squelch the flame of revolt among the workers of England. I have been in England now three weeks and I have not seen the flame. I have only seen a spark here and there, far removed from the torch that is burning in the hands of British labor, and the labor of France, to carry on until we have the liberty to live our own lives.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### DEMOCRACY COMES TO THE TEST

THE opening day of the American-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London, [September 18, 1918] word came of the Austrian peace note.

Within a week of its closing session, at which President Wilson's 14 points became in a new sense the common platform of these workers of the New World and the Old, the President responded, in his Liberty Loan address, to the "assemblies and associations" of "plain workaday people," with a declaration as to five elements which must go into a democratic peace—elements that had been stressed by the Labour and Socialist Conferences of February and September. Within the month President Wilson's 14 points of January 8 and his five of September 27, became the basis of the appeal for peace of the new German chancellor.

Swiftly, in those autumn weeks of 1918, democracy scored its double triumph. The stuff of that triumph was compounded of military force and political ideas. From the English Channel to the River Jordan, its armies drove victoriously at the forces of super-militarism. From Berlin and Vienna and Constantinople, the capitals of autocracy sent word that they accepted the terms set forth by the elected American President.

Here in the United States we had seen less clearly perhaps than had democrats in England and France what distinctly new strength America brought into the Allied front in addition to what was reënforsing. Men, money, ships, supplies—these things they had employed before, these things mixed with courage and high resolve and the fighting capacity of the liberty loving peoples of Britain and France, of Belgium and Italy, Greece, Serbia and the rest. With two million men transported overseas, and with divisions, corps and armies in the thick of the great battles from the channel to Switzerland, we of the United States are stirred that American help turned the scales when that help was most sorely needed.

But the American President brought into the conflict still another force. He set going a moral and political drive. It remained for Woodrow Wilson to parallel the military with a diplomatic offensive.

In the older terminology, the latter was designed to weaken enemy morale. Threats, the spread of rumors of enemy weaknesses, and such like had been used before on both sides with result only to stiffen each people to save themselves. The American President knew a greater TNT and employed it in his public outgivings. It was made up of equal parts of justice, democracy and the vision of a world order that should mean a chance for peace on earth and for good will among men.

It gave the oppressed peoples of Central Europe—Pole and Czech and Jugo-Slav—a feeling that their cause was our cause as a matter not of favor but of general principle. To prompt stirrings of political revolt from the Danube to the Baltic might be to weaken the enemy morale—if we look at the mere negative side of the process. But it had its positive and truer side and that was to awaken democratic faith and fellowship among “suppressed but inextinguishable nationalities” and to release forces which, once a set-back came to the organized power of the Prussian military machine, might assert themselves.

So, also, to distinguish between the German people and the German government that had engineered the war, to hold aloft a vision of a democratic world order in which they might find a place and fair dealing, once they had shaken loose from their masters, and from their masters’ dreams of world domination, was in a negative sense to weaken enemy morale; but it had a positive and truer side. It made for wellsprings of unrest among the liberal and labor forces of Germany which, once a rift or check came to the Prussian machine, might well up into a tidal democratic force.

Now, it must be said that American performance lagged woefully behind the insight and leadership of the President’s utterance. It took twelve to eighteen months for his intuition to work its way down through the strata of administrative policy and action. Our natural allies in fanning the embers of racial freedom in Central Europe, lay close at hand in the immigrant populations of American cities and industrial districts. Yet, in 1917, the average American newspaper got little farther than damning all hyphenates. By 1918 they had begun to publish with glad acclaim the strange guttural names of peoples who were potentialities in the struggle to throw off autocracy in Europe, as they had been fellow searchers with us for the treasures of democracy in the New World. On the Fourth of July, celebrations in a hundred American cities were happy auguries and symbols of Tennyson’s parliament. Colorful parades put this new inrush of race and blood and loyalty in a living stream down our public thoroughfares. The change in public opinion was paralleled in official action. Through the foreign press bureau of

the Committee on Public Information, the ties of immigrant folk with the oppressed nationalities of Central Europe were used, like the antennæ of some new wireless, to message the fraternity of America. The change in the policy of the General Staff was equally slow in coming and equally significant. The Allied governments had seen the importance of visualizing the struggle of the oppressed peoples by bringing into the Western front troops who could bear their colors. While France was recruiting a Polish legion from the United States, groups of non-English speaking soldiers at American cantonments were suspect to commissioned and non-commissioned officers, broken up and passed around as undesirables. At one camp where 3,000 were studying English, 1,853 were transferred at one time. In January, the War Department, wishing to be humane, issued an order that all aliens, meaning all subjects of Germany and Austria-Hungary, might have the privilege of honorable discharge. When such enlightened commanders as Major General Glenn at Camp Sherman, set about a different course, encouraged meetings at which *Her Slovane* was sung—the Slovak patriotic hymn, forbidden in the Austrian army,—the response was instant. "We have had a meeting and changed our minds about the discharge," said thirteen men out of a group of fourteen. "We want to fight for America." "My father and grandfathers never had any opportunity to fight for liberty," wrote a Slovene. Then came another indiscriminating order, forbidding all these soldiers, who had refused discharge but who were not full citizens, from training for fighting. This would have meant a full division<sup>1</sup> lost to the combatant strength of the army had the order stood. It was not until the summer and fall of 1918 that these immigrant groups won general public sanction and official recognition. They won it largely as result of their own self-assertion, stimulated by the coming to America of Prof. Masaryk, to-day president of the new Bohemian republic, and by the friendly agitation of such Americans as Prof. Herbert Adolphus Miller of Western Reserve University. In October tidings went overseas of a new liberty bell cast, a new declaration written and signed by representatives of twelve peoples, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

Similarly, it took eighteen months for the President's intuition and expression of the common feeling among the workers of the world, battered down by the war, to reach the point of a real exchange with the "counsels of plain men." Here our natural allies were the organized workers among the Allies, who as the London *Times* shrewdly put it, could in their declarations address the "la-

<sup>1</sup> "The Lost Division," by Herbert Adolphus Miller, *The Survey*, June 15, 1918.

bor socialists of enemy countries" and speak "a language to which they are accustomed." Yet for nine months after the two great British labor bodies had acclaimed the President's statement of war aims, no sign of recognition came to them from Washington in their unequal fight to espouse the cause of a democratic league of nations, of economic freedom and an unselfish settlement, against forces which disparaged and opposed those ends. There was no public intimation that the delegation the Allied Labour and Socialist Conference desired to send to America to "confer with the forces for democracy" would be received. Bowerman cabled Gompers in June, protesting against the "action of the American government" in holding up the passports of the two delegates from the British Trades Union Congress. "Nobody who ought to get out of England will be denied a passport," said a member of the returned American labor mission. "I thought of this attitude of some of the delegates," wrote John A. Fitch, industrial editor of *The Survey*, in reviewing the St. Paul convention of the A. F. of L.,<sup>1</sup>

when I heard one of the undoubted leaders of the federation say on the floor of the convention that in no other country had the trade union movement been accorded the recognition of its government that the American Federation of Labor has received from the present administration. It led me to wonder whether, after all, it was either government which took the initiative in barring the British delegates.

In stark contrast, all questions of passports were waived in the eleventh hour dispatch at that time of the delegation of the Social Democratic League on their foreign mission which brought them into conflict with the majority opinion in British labor. They were joined on the other side by Charles Edward Russell, who for months had been the London representative of the United States Committee on Public Information. The American Alliance for Labor and Democracy was the subject of a commendatory message from President Wilson during the period in which it was sending out Wallings' unbridled attacks upon Henderson. Conceivably the administration's information was as distorted and as fallacious as had been Gompers'. Conceivably control of international labor relations was regarded in Washington as the province if not the reward of the American Federation of Labor. Gompers' services to the administration were thought of so highly by a member of the cabinet that one issue of the *New York Nation* was actually barred from the mails for venturing the *lese majesty* of criticizing the intent of his trip—an interference with the liberty of the press which contrasted

<sup>1</sup>"British Labor Out of It: The American Federation of Labor Convention at St. Paul," by John A. Fitch, *The Survey*, June 29, 1918.



painfully with that broad spirit of toleration and ingrained belief in liberty which assured the *Labour Leader* and the *Herald* and many other papers free circulation throughout England, in spite of their sweeping condemnations not only of private citizens but of the Premier himself. Only when *The Nation's* case was carried by its publisher to the White House was the Postmaster General overruled. When all known factors are given their due weight, there remains a margin of facts which are unexplained, and which only the future can clear up from the assumption that President Wilson wanted to play a lone hand. For, both officially and unofficially, the White House must have had creditable reports of the truth that has been emphasized in this book that the British labor movement, and with it Allied labor, was the one organized force in all Europe—or for that matter in America—which could be counted upon to stand unflinchingly for the democratic principles which President Wilson had set forth as America's stake in the war—the principles which, as nothing else, gave body to democratic endurance among the Allies, and provoked a ferment of revolt among the common people of the Central Empires.

It was not until his September 27 (1918) address that the President hailed the Allied workers in issuing his tremendous call to the smoldering flames of democratic self-determination in Germany and Austria.

To the suppressed peoples and the constrained working-classes of the Central Empires, he spoke in this fashion:—

At every turn of the war we gain a fresh consciousness of what we mean to accomplish by it. When our hope and expectation are most excited we think more definitely than before of the issues that hang upon it and of the purposes which must be realized by means of it. For it has positive and well-defined purposes which we did not determine and which we cannot alter. No statesman or assembly created them; no statesman or assembly can alter them. They have arisen out of the very nature and circumstances of the war. The most that statesmen or assemblies can do is to carry them out or be false to them. They were perhaps not clear at the outset; but they are clear now. The war has lasted more than four years and the whole world has been drawn into it. The common will of mankind has been substituted for the particular purposes of individual states. Individual statesmen may have started the conflict, but neither they nor their opponents can stop it as they please. It has become a peoples' war, and peoples of all sorts and races, of every degree of power and variety of fortune, are involved in its sweeping processes of change and settlement. We came into it when its character had become fully defined and it was plain that no nation could stand apart or be indifferent to its outcome. Its challenge drove to

the heart of everything we cared for and lived for. The voice of the war had become clear and gripped our hearts. Our brothers from many lands, as well as our own murdered dead under the sea, were calling to us, and we responded, fiercely and of course.

The air was clear about us. We saw things in their full, convincing proportions as they were; and we have seen them with steady eyes and unchanging comprehension ever since. We accepted the issues of the war as facts, not as any group of men either here or elsewhere had defined them, and we can accept no outcome which does not squarely meet and settle them. Those issues are these:

Shall the military power of any nation or group of nations be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?

Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?

Shall peoples be ruled and dominated, even in their own internal affairs, by arbitrary and irresponsible force or by their own will and choice?

Shall there be a common standard of right and privilege for all peoples and nations or shall the strong do as they will and the weak suffer without redress?

Shall the assertion of right be haphazard and by casual alliance or shall there be a common concert to oblige the observance of common rights?

No man, no group of men, chose these to be the issues of the struggle. They *are* the issues of it; and they must be settled—by no arrangement or compromise or adjustment of interests, but definitely and once for all and with a full and unequivocal acceptance of the principle that the interest of the weakest is as sacred as the interest of the strongest.

This is what we mean when we speak of a permanent peace, if we speak sincerely, intelligently, and with a real knowledge and comprehension of the matter we deal with.

We are all agreed that there can be no peace obtained by any kind of bargain or compromise with the governments of the Central Empires, because we have dealt with them already and have seen them deal with other governments that were parties to this struggle, at Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest. They have convinced us that they are without honor and do not intend justice. They observe no covenants, accept no principle but force and their own interest. We cannot "come to terms" with them. They have made it impossible. The German people must by this time be fully aware that we cannot accept the word of those who forced this war upon us. We do not think the same thoughts or speak the same language of agreement.

#### FROM UNREST TO UPRISING IN GERMANY

How deep seated and competent the forces of unrest in Germany and Austria-Hungary had become during the months of 1918, the

ordinary person had no means for knowing. The President's appeal had been directed most consistently to release those of liberalism and national aspiration; that of Allied labor, to working class action. One thing was certain: that in the late winter and spring the Pan-Germans bore down all opposition at home in their supreme attempt to break through in the west and dictate peace as they had done at Brest-Litovsk.

Nevertheless Camille Huysmans had brought word to the English labor leaders as early as January 20, 1918, that the effect of President Wilson's statements inside the Central Empires quite outran anything the German government or the German press admitted. Gains had been made in popular self-assertion the summer before, but during the latter half of 1917 there had been a stiffening up of the dominant opinion, said Huysmans. The German Majority Socialists, he thought, were not so much out of joint with democratic terms of settlement, as that, given the public temper, they were hopeless of carrying them. They had yet, however, to recognize—much less to believe that the German nation would recognize—that the question of Alsace-Lorraine had been reopened by the war as a question of right.

British labor, out of its own experiences with a government labor faction, if for no other reason, had few illusions as to devil and deep sea boundaries of the German Majority Socialists—their factional coercive powers and their insecurity, both above and below. But it had other reasons. Karl Kautsky, speaking for the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany, in the conversations before the Stockholm Committee, on June 29, 1917 (according to the official report of the proceedings as republished by the British Labour Party in August, 1918),

pointed out how the socialists of the so-called majority in Germany appeared to have the same peace program as the Independent Social Democrats, since both demand a peace without annexations or indemnities, but how the agreement consisted solely in the use of the same words, to which the other section assigned a different meaning.

He contended that the views of the majority party were animated by the spirit of a nationalist policy based on force and of militarist thought, which rendered their attitude towards each problem dependent on the military situation. This he demonstrated in detail from the clauses dealing with Austria and Turkey, with Belgium, Poland, and Alsace-Lorraine.

*Vorwärts* published a leading article in March, 1918, in reply to the war aims memorandum of the Inter-Allied Labour and Social-

ist Conference at London in February. As reprinted in the *London Times*, *Vorwärts* [Majority Socialist] said:

The Allied socialists have now evolved an ideal of the coming peace conditions to which we can, on many points, subscribe, though not on all. But the points on which we disagree have no great practical significance. What is more important is the question whether such ideal demands have any prospect of realization, or whether a great part of the socialistic work which is to contribute to a lasting peace, will not be achieved after the conclusion of that peace.

The German Social Democrats were the first to undergo the experience that it is immensely difficult for the socialist party of a victorious state to realize their ideal demands. The peace with Russia has not turned out as we had imagined it. Yet the influence of the socialists in France, England and Italy is not greater, but less, than in Germany. In such circumstances can idealistic demands, wise or unwise as they may be politically, be described as more than a house of cards to be overthrown by any wind that blows? In place of an abstract, universal, just formula would it not be better to seek a basis of practical agreement answering to conditions as they now exist?

Possibly the Allied socialists consider absolutely just certain demands which they make upon Germany and her allies, but they should not overlook the fact that agreement of the Central Powers to such demands nowadays is not expected. There are in Germany two tendencies—one which would be ready to conclude peace at once with the West upon the basis of restoration and the *status quo ante bellum*; and another, which demands alterations favorable to German extension and power. No tendency willing to concede alterations unfavorable to Germany can be said to exist. For instance, a German peace negotiator who would be ready to make concessions with regard to Alsace-Lorraine or Posen would have no prospect of being able to maintain himself in office for twenty-four hours. Possibly the Entente sees in this a fresh proof of the moral obstinacy of Germany, but this is no moral question, only one of facts.

If at the peace conference a proposal were made by negotiators that the Central Powers should allow Czechs, Slovaks and Jugo-Slavs to form a free union of Danube states in place of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, what would be the answer? We beg to be excused for saying that the Central Powers would simply laugh! Because, first of all, the fact would be overlooked that in the Austro-Hungarian Empire there are others besides the above named peoples. In addition to which, it would be extremely Utopian to present demands to an unconquered state to operate on its own body.

The idea that Alsace-Lorraine peoples should be consulted represents a decided step down from the former attitude of unqualified disannexation. Practically no great result could be expected. If victorious, France would never forego her "rights" to Alsace-Lor-



rairie or allow them to be in any way disputed. At the best we should be treated to a poor comedy of self-determination. In the same way, the German bourgeois sees no military grounds for consenting to a revision of the Alsace-Lorraine question. Demands for such would be absolutely without a chance for success. Apart from this there are very good grounds for refusing to allow the possession of Alsace-Lorraine by Germany to be any further disputed. The population of Alsace-Lorraine belongs ethnographically to the German people. The province has, according to the Social Democratic conception, the right to her freedom within the German Empire, but her right to secede from it altogether is, to say the least, a very debatable question.

Meanwhile, the time for such more or less academic considerations is past. All socialistic effort must concentrate upon a peace which is tenable and bearable for all. And why should it be unbearable for England, France, Belgium and Italy if a peace were concluded which restored in the main the pre-war conditions in the West? In any case they would do well to remember that a program is unworkable as a practicable peace program which is drawn up beforehand to the disadvantage of the Central Powers. Such a program could not be realized either by an international Socialist congress or by a diplomatic conference, but only by the victory of the Entente.

Yet as early as midwinter of 1918, there were indications that in trade union after trade union, the Independent Socialists, not a few of whose leaders were in prison, were undermining this majority element that had knuckled in to the government. Thus, to quote some paragraphs in the *Manchester Guardian* of March 2, 1918, on "The Rift in German Socialism":—

Socialism in Germany has two aspects, parliamentary and trade union. The Parliamentary Party split relatively early, and after efforts at compromise failed, the Independents set about constituting their own party organization throughout the country. Defection from the Majority Party has from time to time increased the strength of the Independents in the Reichstag, and beyond doubt their growth in the country among the masses has been much more rapid. But hitherto the Majority Party have maintained absolute control over the socialist trade unions.

What this meant was shown during the strikes. The directorate of the trade union organization denounced the strike, and the trade unions withheld strike pay. The vice-chancellor cited this last as one of the effective causes of the collapse of the strike movement. The strikers, on their part, made plain that they had still less confidence in the trade union leaders than in the Reichstag majority deputies. It was hoped that the strike would have educated the Majority Party to its duty, but there is little trace of a change of

heart and mind. The Majority very tepidly rebuked the government for its treatment of Russia, but are determined not to go into opposition or to separate from the "bourgeois" party, who with them constitute the majority of the Reichstag.

The Independent Socialist Party is drawing the moral that it must establish itself in the trade unions also and wrest the monopoly of them from a party which has proved unfaithful to its socialist provisions. A beginning is being attempted at Stuttgart to form a new trade union organization under independent auspices. Of course this is denounced by the Majority as the extension of a fratricidal struggle. But the Independents, not unnaturally, hold that the world, after years of devastated war, has got to the stage at which only realities matter, not labels; and that where there is clear conflict of ideas and actions it is humbug to speak of brotherhood. This new movement deserves the closest watching. It is likely to develop more quickly than the political split which was the prelude to it.

As a straw, also, take this paragraph from an article published in the *Tägliche Rundschau* in June—some time after the Allied labor memorandum may be supposed to have percolated among the German workers:

When placards which display the world situation and our position as against our enemies are openly ridiculed and described as lies and deception, and when, at a meeting of the Fatherland Party broken up by socialists, the cry can be heard: "He who fights against England is an enemy of mankind," the initiated understand from what direction the wind is blowing.

Scheideman, speaking on July 5, before the Reichstag on von Kühlmann's speech, charged that "the gentlemen at main headquarters" were "self-deceived if they believe they are able to impose peace on the world."

"In principle, we socialists," this majority party leader said, "are against all annexations, all violence, whether with great or little sacrifices, or whether useful or useless for the conquering people. . . . The oppression is the more revolting the greater the difference between the strength of the oppressor and the oppressed." But he still based his position less on questions of principle than on questions of fact. In the matter of facts he may be considered a competent witness of the following:—

Amongst the masses an intensified bitterness exists, not only among the industrial working people, but also among the great masses of the officials, clerks, middle classes and agricultural people, and throughout the country there is only one feeling which can be summarized in one word—finish. Finish honorably, of course. On

this point there is no difference of opinion. Finish without humiliation of Germany, but finish (strong applause from the left). The people know the truth and are completely unmoved by any attempts to impress them. The people want to end this war as quickly as possible for a war of defense which has succeeded.

The government must be the bearer of this inflexible will of the people. We demand from you that the government recognize the right of Belgium to complete independence, without any reserve, and that she does everything in order to gain us a speedy peace without harming the interests of Germany. A government which would follow such a broad policy of peace we should gladly support, but for a government which, after four years of war, has not been able to suppress the military law, we cannot vote the credits. It is high time to recognize the needs of the people and to act accordingly.

Strikes and the threats of strikes became so acute in July and August, and the increase of the vote for socialist candidates of the radical and republican minority at local elections became so pronounced that the government sought refuge from the gathering storm by inviting the leaders of the moderate Socialist Majority to come into the cabinet. In answer, Scheidemann and his colleagues produced an ultimatum reiterating the peace aims of the July, 1917, resolution, with various new ones, and amplified by a number of detailed demands for drastic changes in the constitution and civil law, including complete freedom of the press and of assembly and appointment of all cabinet officers from the Reichstag majority. The Hertling cabinet, with its Junker backing, we are now told, was unable to accept these conditions and fell.

How much of these domestic tendencies would have been conveyed to the British and Allied leaders by Troelstra, the Dutch Socialist who was denied passports to England in June, we do not know. He cabled (July 1, 1918) that the German majority Socialists would accept the peace proposals of the Stockholm neutral committee—a cable which led Henderson to make a hopeful announcement.

This Henderson later retracted, for a letter by Herman Müller of the Socialist Democratic Party, dated June 26 and later printed in *Vorwärts*, stated that the Majority Socialists were ready to meet with Allied representatives but saw "no cause to depart" from their earlier declarations (approved by the party congress at Würzburg in August, 1917) which, as already pointed out, the Independent Social Democrats had denounced at Stockholm. Also, early in July, Troelstra wrote an open letter to Henderson in *Het Volk*, which made it clear that the Majority German Socialists were unprepared to accept the London memorandum or the neutral man-

ifesto as the basis for an inter-belligerent labor conference without those reservations<sup>1</sup> which Henderson scored at the American-Allied Labour and Socialist conference in mid-September. It was this failure of the German majority group to table a satisfactory reply, no less than the question of passports, that created the "obstacle" which led Allied labor at London (Chapter XXII) to pass its resolutions calling on the minority groups in Germany and elsewhere to exert their pressure upon the German majority.

#### ANSWERS TO LABOR'S DIPLOMACY

Knowledge of the existence of such groups and belief that they were increasingly getting out of hand gave the Allied labor leaders firmness in holding to the inter-belligerent conference project as a fulcrum for their democratic leverage. At a time when even such optimistic prophets as General Smuts did not see prospect of a military decision short of another year, they refused to abandon it in the face of government hostility that threatened to wreck the unity of the British labor movement on this issue.

But these chapters have been seriously at fault if they have conveyed the impression that the Allied labor leaders pinned their hopes for results from their "diplomacy of democracy" solely upon a consultative conference. Their tactics embraced first of all that massing of evidence as to democratic aims, of assurances as to Allied labor's intention to stand out against counter aggression in the event of working class insurgency in the Central Powers, which we have interpreted at length. In August, the British Labour Party brought out in pamphlet form the replies that had been received to date from the socialist parties of the Central Powers. Those of the Bulgarian, Austrian and Hungarian groups are of very real significance in the light of subsequent events.

The reply of the Bulgarian United Social Democratic Party, the "Broads," was published in *Narod* in April and May. They gave their full support to the

general part of the inter-allied memorandum, the league of nations, disarmament, arbitration and the peoples' right to settle their own

<sup>1</sup> A dispatch to the London *Times* from Amsterdam on September 16, stated that Troelstra had been in conference with Ebert, chairman of the German Majority Socialists—and later head of the socialist government which succeeded that of Prince Max—stating that the German Majority Socialists accepted as a basis the neutral memorandum of the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee of Stockholm, except as regards compensation to Belgium (on which they suggested some compromise) and as regards Alsace-Lorraine (on which they maintained their standpoint).



destiny. This part does not admit of compromise and, according to a declaration made by Henderson, it bears the character of an ultimatum addressed to the socialists of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. . . .

One half of the international proposes a formal solution for a common international organization in the immediate future, and gives concrete proposals for the future of all countries and different states.

The transmission of the Inter-Allied memorandum to us—the Socialists of the Central Powers—constitutes a remarkable event which may have great consequences for Inter-Socialist relations.

In disagreement, the Bulgarians wanted to see the rule of international control proposed for tropical Africa adapted to all colonies; the rule of nullification of the Treaty of Frankfort which tore Alsace and Lorraine from France, applied to treaties which divided Macedonia between Serbia and Greece. They demanded for its people the right of self-determination.

The Hungarian Social Democratic Party<sup>1</sup> declared that the resolutions of the London conference were "not opposed" to the views it had expressed to the Dutch-Scandinavian Committee at Stockholm:

The principal conditions we have indicated are:—The federation of all nations in a league of nations; the obtaining by all peoples of the right of self-determination; international disarmament; compulsory courts of arbitration; a peace without annexations or punitive contributions; the recognition of the right of free economic development for all nations, and the incorporation of the social demands of labor in the peace treaty.

We declared, in particular, in favor of the restitution of Belgium and Serbia, and examined in detail the question of indemnities with regard to these two countries.

After reconsidering our Stockholm memorandum, we are bound to declare that the resolutions of the London Conference are not opposed to our views.

It follows that we consider the resolutions of the London Conference, as well as the results of the Stockholm discussions, as a suitable basis for an immediate convocation of an international conference, and we should gladly welcome such a conference. We declare beforehand our acceptance of every resolution agreed upon by this conference, and inspired by a labor and socialist spirit, and we declare that we will fight with all our strength for the execution of such resolutions, prepared as we are to make the greatest sacrifices in order to attain this end.

<sup>1</sup> The Hungarian text was a translation of original documents handed to Troelstra by a representative of the Hungarian party, and published in *Het Volk*, the organ of the Dutch Socialist Party.

The reply of the German Social Democratic Party of Austria was published in *Die Arbeiter-Zeitung* of June 28, 1918. The peace should realize, it said, the following principles:

Firstly.—Union of all peoples in a league of nations, which would effect international disarmament, submit all conflicts between states to the decision of a compulsory arbitration tribunal, and bring the collective strength of the whole league to bear on any state which transgressed international law.

Secondly.—No annexations. The solution of all territorial questions on the basis of the rights of peoples to dispose of themselves.

Thirdly.—No indemnities. Equal freedom of economic development for all peoples and the prevention of all economic wars.

Such a peace, in the view of the Austrian Socialists could “not be obtained by the victory of one imperialist group over the other”; nor would a “so-called peace by conciliation, concluded from capitalist considerations, completely realize it,” but it might “consolidate the democratic, peaceful and socialist tendencies in all countries,”—especially if labor and socialism were to succeed by their action in bringing their governments to the discussion table, and thus “appear to the peoples as the peace bringers, the liberators from the horrors and sacrifices of war.” Therefore:—

The sooner the working classes in all belligerent countries decide to exercise pressure on their governments in favor of peace, the sooner will they be able to exercise an influence not only upon the beginning of the peace negotiations, but also upon the terms of peace and the future organization of mankind.

Points in the Austrian reply of special interest were these:—

We demand the transformation of Austria-Hungary into a federation of autonomous states, and we also demand the creation of a League of the Balkan peoples.

We oppose all annexations by the Central Powers of frontier peoples detached from Russia. In Parliament and in the press we have fought against the peace of Brest-Litovsk and the peace of Bucharest, and when Parliament has to come to a decision on those treaties, we shall reject every sentence which connotes annexation or violence.

We claim, as we have always done, the reestablishment and compensation of Belgium. But we do not consider that the question of who is to bear the expense of this compensation is one of first-rate importance from the point of view of the beginning of peace negotiations.

Considering the immense sacrifices of the war, sacrifices not only in money and goods but in human life, we oppose any prolongation

of the war on account of disagreements over financial questions. We think that there must be a compromise on the apportionment of the cost of reconstruction of the small countries.

With regard to the questions of Alsace-Lorraine, Italy, Poland, Turkey and the tropical colonies, we are of the opinion that an absolutely democratic peace, a peace consistent with the principles of International Socialism, would settle these questions also in the spirit of the peoples' right of self-determination. But we are under no illusions on this point; we appreciate the fact that this demand will not be realized.

Even by the roundabout methods through which British labor gained intelligence of the replies noted, nothing got through from the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany. Its general temper can be indicated by some paragraphs from its earlier Stockholm memorandum:

We demand the fullest freedom for international trade and intercourse, as well as an unrestricted right of emigration and of immigration, with the object of developing the world's productive forces and of bringing the peoples into closer touch with each other and multiplying the bonds which unite them.

We oppose any policy of economic isolation and any economic struggle between states. All disputes between states must be settled by international arbitration. . . .

In the same way we condemn this method of solving the question of Alsace-Lorraine, and here we are in agreement with Engels and Jaures. A prolongation of the war on the question of Alsace-Lorraine now means that the whole world, including Alsace-Lorraine, is to be ravaged because of the dispute which has arisen in regard to the wishes of this population, and that more people will be destroyed on the battlefields than there are inhabitants in Alsace-Lorraine. . . .

Complete political and economic independence of Belgium is inevitable. In fulfillment of the solemn promise of the German government at the beginning of the war, the Belgian nation must obtain reparation for the damage caused by the war, and especially for the economic loss which it has sustained.

Such reparation has nothing in common with the war indemnities, which are simply a plundering of the vanquished by the victor, and which we therefore reject. . . .

The drawing up of a peace program is important, but this program is nothing but smoke if it is not supported by energetic international action on the part of the masses.

We must compel all the governments to adopt unconditionally this international peace program. We must refuse credits to any government which rejects this program, replies evasively or does not declare itself ready to enter into peace negotiations on the basis of

this program. Such a government must be fought in the most decisive manner.

The organization and prosecution of such common action should be the first task of the proposed international peace conference. It must bring together all the really Socialist elements, determined to work with all their strength to this end.

In the light of the October and November uprisings, additional paragraphs in the Hungarian and Austrian replies have importance. They were couched in terms of concerted international action; they were executed nationally; that even in July there was prospect of this was indicated by the fact that these paragraphs were suppressed by the Hungarian and Austrian censors.

The censored Hungarian paragraph read:

We consider it the greatest danger for the whole future of the labor and socialist movement that—putting aside all special questions—we should not now reach an agreement amongst labor and socialist parties on this one point, the necessity of bringing pressure on the governments by common and simultaneous action.

From the movements conducted by the Hungarian Party, during the last year, movements which found expression in meetings, demonstrations, and general strikes in favor of peace, and from the influence exercised by these movements and those of the working classes in Austria and Germany, both on each other and the opponents of the working classes, and also from the absence of strong action in the Entente countries, we conclude that the movements of the working classes, who think and feel internationally, must be the consequence of an international agreement and be directed internationally. Every other method, if not a complete failure, would, at the very least, be followed by a complete absence of results and a waste of working-class strength.

The censored Austrian paragraph read:

The most important task of labor and socialism is rather to push the governments towards peace by taking strong action in every country. If this policy is carried out continuously and with great enough force in the different countries, the governments will be obliged to take their places at the same table for the purpose of negotiations, and will find themselves in a compromise between their respective demands; that compromise will be the basis of the peace treaty. The organization of such work on the part of the working classes of all countries would, in our opinion, be the most important work of the international conference.

#### LABOR PRESSURE UPON THE ALLIED GOVERNMENTS

There was yet another line of pressure exerted by the Allied labor and socialist concert—that upon their own governments to



parallel the joint labor formulation of war aims with a joint government formulation—both as a democratic assurance which would strengthen unity at home, and as a challenge to the workers in the Central Empires to bring pressure to bear upon their own governments to match it—which last, in the end, however generated and under the shadow of military defeat, broke through the encrustings of German and Austrian imperialism. For it was this social pressure upon the governments, not to stop the war but to lay down the basis for a democratic peace; not to bargain, but to lay down the principles which should be compromised in neither war nor peace, that was the motivation of the controlling majority Allied labor groups. We have followed their expression of it through these pages.

At its meeting in September (1918), the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London approved the stand of President Wilson in rejecting the Austrian note on the ground that it proposed a secret conference and that the government of the United States had “clearly and publicly formulated its own war aims.” It then turned round and challenged the Allied governments, whatever their earlier commitments to each other, formally to

subscribe to the fourteen points formulated by President Wilson, thus adopting a policy of clearness and moderation as opposed to a policy dictated exclusively by changes in the war map. . . .

It is by defining their own war aims jointly with the United States, with the same precision and clearness, that the Allied governments will give to the workers of the world the conviction they are resolved to continue the struggle not in order to meet the aggression of the central monarchies by undertaking in their turn a war of conquest, but for the single purpose of establishing on an unassailable foundation a peace which will be just and lasting, and in conformity with the aspirations of international democracy.

Clearly it was to this Allied labor resolution that, a week later, the President in his September 27 address replied:—

As I have said, neither I nor any other man in governmental authority created or gave form to the issues of this war. I have simply responded to them with such vision as I could command. But I have responded gladly and with a resolution that has grown warmer and more confident as the issues have grown clearer and clearer. It is now plain that they are issues which no man can pervert unless it be willfully. I am bound to fight for them, and happy to fight for them as time and circumstance have revealed them to me as to all the world. Our enthusiasm for them grows more and more irresistible as they stand out in more and more vivid and unmistakable outline.

And the forces that fight for them draw into closer and closer array, organize their millions into more and more unconquerable might, as they become more and more distinct to the thought and purpose of the peoples engaged. It is the peculiarity of this great war that while statesmen have seemed to cast about for definitions of their purpose and have sometimes seemed to shift their ground and their point of view, the thought of the mass of men, whom statesmen are supposed to instruct and lead, has grown more and more unclouded, more and more certain of what it is that they are fighting for. National purposes have fallen more and more into the background and the common purpose of enlightened mankind has taken their place. The counsels of plain men have become on all hands more simple and straightforward and more unified than the counsels of sophisticated men of affairs, who still retain the impression that they are playing a game of power and playing for high stakes. That is why I have said that this is a peoples' war, not a statesmen's. Statesmen must follow the clarified common thought or be broken.

I take that to be the significance of the fact that assemblies and associations of many kinds made up of plain workaday people have demanded, almost every time they came together, and are still demanding, that the leaders of their governments declare to them plainly what it is, exactly what it is, that they are seeking in this war, and what they think the items of the final settlement should be. They are not yet satisfied with what they have been told. They still seem to fear that they are getting what they ask for only in statesmen's terms,—only in the terms of territorial arrangements and divisions of power, and not in terms of broad-visioned justice and mercy and peace and the satisfaction of those deep-seated longings of oppressed and distracted men and women and enslaved peoples that seem to them the only things worth fighting a war for that engulfs the world. Perhaps statesmen have not always recognized this changed aspect of the whole world of policy and action. Perhaps they have not always spoken in direct reply to the questions asked because they did not know how searching those questions were and what sort of answers they demanded.

But I, for one, am glad to attempt the answer again and again, in the hope that I may make it clearer and clearer that my one thought is to satisfy those who struggle in the ranks and are, perhaps above all others, entitled to a reply whose meaning no one can have any excuse for misunderstanding, if he understands the language in which it is spoken or can get some one to translate it correctly into his own. . . .

#### FRUITS OF THE CIVIL OFFENSIVE

Balked by the German majority Socialists in their inter-belligerent conference project, and balked at home in their efforts to get a joint statement of war aims from the Allied governments, the Allied

workers kept their own blade of labor diplomacy in hand but stood ready to sustain the American President in his civil offensive; just as they continued to stand ready to back up their own armies in the military offensive so long as the threat of German militarism hung over Europe.

As in the case of the military command, the caliber of this moral and political drive depended upon unity. We have seen that, while neither the President nor Allied labor had succeeded in drawing out the Allied governments as a whole, British labor had elicited a statement from the Premier in December, 1917, which was fairly parallel to its own, and that Lloyd George in Paris in July, 1918, stated that the Germans could have peace to-morrow if they would accept it on Wilson's terms—a statement which was paralleled by General Smuts in September. We have seen that it was this knowledge which made it tenable for such a labor leader as Clynes, the food controller, to remain in the government. With then, the American President, members of the British cabinet, liberals in France and England, Allied socialist and labor bodies, we had a new, if fragmentary, western front of diplomacy.

It is of course altogether clear that this civil offensive alone would not have produced the quick about-face in October on the part of Germany. So long as the army was gaining, the pan-Germans were in the saddle. The answer to them was force—force to the uttermost. It meant death and struggle and courage unstinted, poured into the military offensive. But it is doubtful if the recoil of the German armies, even if supplies and men were in parlous jeopardy on French soil, would have led to such a quick abandonment of the program of conquest, had it not been for the insurgent civilian forces which had been released by the new statesmanship of the West. As General Maurice pointed out, probably never before in history had a nation admitted defeat with its armies still far in enemy territory.

First to be reckoned with was the consummate ability of Foch, Dias, Petain, Haig, Pershing and their lieutenants, the tremendous impact of valor and metal with which they battered through the Hindenburg line. But there were other forces at work. There was the silent pressure of the British fleet and the sapping of undernourishment. There was the incalculable mining of Bolshevism, however despised in the Allied capitals. The prospect of 250,000 fresh American troops a month and ultimate defeat entered in; and also, the prospect of an American settlement. In the rapid exchange of notes, the superiority of the new tactics to the old seems incontrovertible. Every fuming of fresh reprisals, of annihilation and counter-conquest, on the part of Allied statesmen had thrown Ger-

man liberals into the hands of the old order. But President Wilson's insistence upon a convincing exhibit of popular control as a precedent to peace could not permanently be turned by the Pan-Germans to their advantage; his demand for more and more power in the hands of the German democracy was a demand not for their annihilation but for their deliverance. To their reënforcement, also, was his inescapable citation of fresh U-boat activities and the abuse of civilians in the course of the retreat in France, as a test of their sincerity and of their ability to hold the powers of ruthlessness in leash. For the President to have refused to deal with the German people on the terms he had set would have exploded his whole statesmanship; to be Scotch-Irish canny to the tips of his fingers in making sure that he was dealing with the people and on those terms, was a different matter.

When a ridge or a U-boat base had been taken, a trench line broken through or a transportation junction captured, it was fairly easy to gauge the military gain; even the civilian felt he had some measure for judgment. But to judge the gain of a diplomatic offensive was a new problem; the results were less tangible, the assurances less accepted.

We no longer think in terms of hostages, sacked cities, enslaved prisoners, as tokens of security. But we cling to notions of invaded capitals and punitive war indemnities—such as rankled for forty years in the heart of France. Whatever the President's course with respect to the German overtures, it was to be expected that those who believed in these things, those who had had no understanding of his paralleling political offensive, those who had had no sympathy for his proposal of a league of nations as the keystone to a world safe for democracy, those who saw the only security for the future in reliance on individual national might buttressed by economic barriers, competitive armaments and universal military establishments—or in fighting alliances of such nations—would attack his course.

But the President weighed other things than these attacks. He saw only less security in a whipped militarism, bound and gagged and biding its time, than he saw in an unrepentant militarism couched for a breathing spell behind a false front of reform.

In his reply, he gave weight first to the tangible military securities which the Allied command under Foch would define against any throwback of the German military machine a month hence or a decade hence. There was to be no risking safety there. He would not discard the military procedure for the political until the ends he sought were fully assured. He did not discard political procedure for the military merely because the ends seemed to be in sight. When it came to the less tangible political securities, he gave less



weight to the weakening of German morale than to the emergence of a new common purpose—the exact extent of the democratic forces which seemingly had asserted themselves, their ability to continue to do so, their durable superimposition upon the old dynastic, arbitrary, imperialistic scheme of control which had held them down and threatened all Europe. Rather he saw security in a new constitution of Germany, grounded at home in responsibility to the people, and held in a compact of free nations.

British labor saw and understood and upheld his course—in its uncertain beginnings no less than in its masterful culmination; registering its support at a time when the course the President took was violently attacked in many quarters on both sides of the Atlantic.<sup>1</sup>

At a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress and the National Executive of the Labour Party on October 9 [1918] British labor issued a joint statement which said:

The new peace offer from the government of the Central Empires creates a situation full of possibilities which the Allied peoples and governments cannot afford to ignore. The German proposal is made by a government which includes representatives of the majority parties in the Reichstag. We are, therefore, of the opinion that the offer is entitled to receive reasoned consideration.

We frankly recognize that a further elucidation of these proposals is absolutely necessary before the military effort of the Allies can be checked. As an essential preliminary the Central Powers must withdraw their armies from all the occupied territory, and give a public and unequivocal declaration of their willingness to apply the principles formulated by President Wilson honestly and unreservedly to every question to be dealt with in the final settlement. Only by such preliminary measures, applying these principles, in President Wilson's words, "to substantive items which must constitute the body of any final settlement," can we have confidence in their will to peace and obtain the necessary guarantees that every issue raised at the peace conference will be discussed as a matter of justice and international right, rather than as a matter for bargain and compromise between the several states.

At the same time we urge the Allied governments to declare publicly and collectively that an unqualified acceptance of President Wilson's conditions, including the league of nations, would be the beginning of official negotiations for a general peace. We should thus have a joint definition of purpose and of agreement upon the basis of peace, which would make fruitful discussion possible. We hold, with the President of the United States, that such definition and agreement form an essential preliminary of negotiations between

<sup>1</sup>Samuel Gompers sent a public cable from Italy (October, 1918), as out of joint with the President's procedure as his earlier utterances had been out of joint with that of British labor.

the warring governments. We share his view that the method of approach to the final settlement cannot be that of the Congress of Vienna, where the diplomatists secretly carved up the various countries without reference either to the desires of the inhabitants or to the will of the nations for which they professed to act.

The people have endured their grievous sufferings and borne their heavy burdens in the hope that the final settlement will be enduring peace and security for mankind. Within the framework of the war aims of the organized workers of the Allied nations, and the program of President Wilson, we believe such a peace can be erected upon a foundation of the self-determination of peoples. This principle must govern the discussion of every question of a territorial and political character dealt with at the peace conference. To ignore it can only result in an unprincipled compromise. Our generation has been paying a heavy penalty because this principle has been violated or ignored in the peace settlements that have followed previous European wars. The present world struggle has resulted mainly from such violation of the right of small nations and of nationalities that have hitherto lacked cohesion and force to establish their claim to live under forms of government of their own choosing.

As representatives of the organized workers, we call upon the government to explore this new avenue open to peace with a single desire to ascertain whether it leads to the new international order and the general peace we can all unite to cherish and protect.

#### THE OLD ORDER AND THE NEW

Throughout the months of 1917 and 1918, when the American President was slowly enunciating the elements of what throughout Western Europe came to be known as the "Wilson policies"—the broad principles of a society of nations as against the old balance of power and war system, the projection of a new era of international coöperation built on respect for nationality and the self-determination of peoples—the Pan-Germans were in full cry for the old order of individual might ruthlessly to be applied by them. They lost. But so long as their armies were successful in the field, the liberal forces within the Empires exhibited helplessness.

With the change in the tide of battle, the democracy of the democratic nations came to the test. They had proved their ability to challenge, check and turn back the supreme embodiment of dynastic ambition and commercial imperialism working through the machinery of militarism and autocracy. Would they, with German imperialism beaten, lay the fabric of a new era that should make the war seem worth its cost to the millions of families whose men had gone down in it?

Throughout the months of 1917 and 1918 when not only the American President, but British and Allied labor, were slowly enunciating their democratic scheme, the older diplomacy pitted against the Pan-Germans did not drop out of existence. What of the old commitments among the Allies to Italy, for example? They had never been officially waived. The division of Turkey as a field for national economic exploitation (as expressed in the secret treaties) had never been wholly abandoned in favor of autonomy for its several parts under international supervision; there had never been a complete disclaimer by any means of the Paris economic agreement; the agitation for a three-deckèr preferential tariff in the British empire—colonies first, Allies second, enemies third—had never been abandoned. The Sailor's Union and their propaganda of a 5-year boycott was in a sense but the personification of an economic war after the war.

With the Allied armies forging ahead on the western front, these old desires flamed up, disclosing particularly lively embers. The speech-making of Premier Hughes, of Australia, at the Derby conference of the British Trades Union Congress was an effort under the guise of patriotism to dislodge the Labour Party as an obstruction to the sweep of powerful interests in the economic life.

Four if not five of the points made *seriatim* by the President in his September 27 address were directed at forces within the Allies—curbs against those things which to his mind would render a league of free nations impossible and go back to the old, insecure, burdensome, antagonistic scheme of things before the war. There was no mistaking his meaning when he said:

It is of capital importance that we should also be explicitly agreed that no peace shall be obtained by any kind of compromise or abatement of the principles we have avowed as the principles for which we are fighting. There should exist no doubt about that. I am, therefore, going to take the liberty of speaking with the utmost frankness about the practical implications that are involved in it.

If it be indeed and in truth the common object of the Governments associated against Germany and of the nations whom they govern, as I believe it to be, to achieve by the coming settlements a secure and lasting peace, it will be necessary that all who sit down at the peace table shall come ready and willing to pay the price, the only price, that will procure it; and ready and willing, also, to create in some virile fashion the only instrumentality by which it can be made certain that the agreements of the peace will be honored and fulfilled.

That price is impartial justice in every item of the settlement, no matter whose interest is crossed; and not only impartial justice, but also the satisfaction of the several peoples whose fortunes are

dealt with. That indispensable instrumentality is a League of Nations formed under covenants that will be efficacious. Without such an instrumentality, by which the peace of the world can be guaranteed, peace will rest in part upon the word of outlaws, and only upon that word. For Germany will have to redeem her character, not by what happens at the peace table but by what follows.

And, as I see it, the constitution of that League of Nations and the clear definition of its objects must be a part, is in a sense the most essential part, of the peace settlement itself. It cannot be formed now. If formed now, it would be merely a new alliance confined to the nations associated against a common enemy. It is not likely that it could be formed after the settlement. It is necessary to guarantee the peace; and the peace cannot be guaranteed as an afterthought. The reason, to speak in plain terms again, why it must be guaranteed is that there will be parties to the peace whose promises have proved untrustworthy, and means must be found in connection with the peace settlement itself to remove that source of insecurity. It would be folly to leave the guarantee to the subsequent voluntary action of the Governments we have seen destroy Russia and deceive Rumania.

But these general terms do not disclose the whole matter. Some details are needed to make them sound less like a thesis and more like a practical program. These, then, are some of the particulars, and I state them with the greater confidence because I can state them authoritatively as representing this government's interpretation of its own duty with regard to peace:

First, the impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just. It must be a justice that plays no favorites and knows no standard but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned;

Second, no special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all;

Third, there can be no leagues or alliances or special covenants and understandings within the general and common family of the League of Nations;

Fourth, and more specifically, there can be no special, selfish economic combinations within the league and no employment of any form of economic boycott or exclusion except as the power of economic penalty by exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested in the League of Nations itself as a means of discipline and control;

Fifth, all international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world.

Special alliances and economic rivalries and hostilities have been the prolific source in the modern world of the plans and passions that produce war. It would be an insincere as well as an insecure peace that did not exclude them in definite and binding terms.



The President had made himself the spokesman for the plain people of the Allied nations—people who had borne the heavy load of military resistance and who had hailed the new diplomacy—people who were not wedded to the old fetiches of conquest and who were fired by his vision of a new day. They were to reveal their support in demonstrations and mass meetings on his coming to France and England and Italy and he was to reach out to them, across official barriers, in utterances which served notice of their common aims. They were in turn to serve notice of their stubborn determination to “carry on” for a democratic international order, should one and all the statesmen fail at Versailles—in the resolutions passed on at the international labor and socialist conferences which were at length convened at Berne in February, 1919, and which demanded a council of representatives of peoples rather than of governments as basic to a league of nations, and common control over the machinery of war as essential to a “clean and lasting peace.”

The constitution of a world was at stake—in the settlement and in the years succeeding; and only the long range view of history will show how much, in the molding of that constitution, will be found to have been due to the building up in Western Europe, in the midst of the mistrust and bitterness of war, of a body of workers, British, French, Belgian, and Italian, socialist and trade union alike, whose dominant, organized power was neighbor to the Allied war chancellories and was a power for good; how much to the fact that their new and robust presence had come among the beribboned figures of diplomacy.



PART IV  
WORKERS' CONTROL





## CHAPTER XXIV

### TOWARDS DEMOCRACY IN RECONSTRUCTION

WE have followed the course of British labor in the war to the armistice upon the battlefields and the gathering of the nations at Versailles, to the British elections and the break with the war coalition, to the transition from war work to reconstruction.

The peace begins another epoch. The war witnessed the crashing down of the superstructures of the old. In the midst of it were laid the foundations of the new. Just as we as a nation shared only briefly and at the close in the inexorable strain of the conflict which reached from the grinding surfaces of the trenches far back to every rivet and strut of the social order, so we are less conscious of recoils which affect the whole fabric of European civilization now that the tension is removed. The changes while the war was on must needs have been momentous if we recognize its outcome as in great measure due, on the one hand, to the failure of centralized Prussian autocracy to carry enduring conviction among its coerced populations and, on the other hand, to the latent power for concerted action among a loosely hung group of freer, self-willed peoples. These efforts of two conflicting schemes of political government, each to hold its own vantage ground and to match the special quality which its opponent possessed at the start, could not fail to provoke profound reactions on either hand. The swing toward republicanism, revolution and liberty in Germany and Austria-Hungary once the war was over predicates shiftings towards collectivism among the Allies, as far reaching if not so swift, and as fundamental, if not in kind.

But more, we have been party to a struggle of endurance not between two opposed mechanisms, but between great groups of sentient human beings—to whose slow onward march the war was, at the start, an imperious interruption and, at the close, a great deliverance for democracy with its free choices and its blendings between old and new.

In a time of change, certain master ideas ride a population and carry it far. Prince Kropotkin has said:—

There are moments in the life of mankind when certain general ideas prepared by a slow evolution of the mind get hold with an

unprecedented clearness of the great masses of man. Such a moment takes place now.

The danger is that one shall write cautiously and seek to translate revolutionary force into terms of moderate social reform. To write tamely of great changes in prospect is as misleading as to write extravagantly of little ones achieved. Balanced and temperate statements of the coming reconstruction will not suffice to render the radical alteration which British labor demands. Labor feels that something prophetic is needed. From the ground up the remaking must be done. Europe is in ruins and cannot be tinkered. A restoration of the old society, with its institutions just as they stood before the war, is clearly impossible. That which has got into the minds of the people is that conscious control of life is possible.

Our chapters have been concerned primarily with the months of 1918 in which British labor laid the political and economic macadam of its new street of to-morrow. We have retraced the crossways that led up to it through the earlier years of the war and seen them reaching back to the long rough cobbled road which a vast and vaster company of men and women have paced since the industrial revolution brought into being a new estate in Western Europe—made up of wage earners.

We have endeavored to sketch in broad outline three manifestations of the British labor movement in the midst of the war. They are all in the direction of an expansion of democracy—of the worker's say in the governance of his work and of his nation and of the world.

The modern industrial movement in Western Europe, the movement of the organized workers in trade unions, concerns itself with the organization of producers. Its area is the day's work. It begins with wages and hours, but it reaches out to a share in management. It claims that the producer must control production. It forecasts workers' control of industry: self-government in industry. It expressed itself afresh in wartime England in the shop stewards' committees, the spread of industrial unionism, the Triple Alliance, and the joint boards. Its extreme statement (which will not find acceptance in Great Britain) is French and Italian syndicalism, which would brush aside the state and conceivably might end in a tyranny of the strongest industrial group, or in an anarchy of contending trades.

The modern political movement of labor in Western Europe concerns itself with the organization of voters. It functions through parliaments and local councils and boards. It deals primarily with man, the consumer, rather than with man, the producer. It there-

fore is a territorial-geographical association (instead of a workshop association). The members of the association live together (in the industrial association they work together). The political movement concerns itself with nationalization of the means of production, the division of the national product and the distribution of wealth. Its extreme statement (which will not find acceptance in Great Britain) is German state socialism which conceivably might stifle freedom in centralized organization.

The British labor movement, driven on by the industrial impulse and the political impulse, alike, tends, in the phrase of the labor press, toward "ownership by the state and management by the workers."

For the political impulse toward collectivism, the Labour Party is the custodian. Arthur Henderson is its engineer and Sidney Webb one of its interpreters. Webb not only gave constructive craftsmanship to the formulation of labor's foreign policies, but with Snowden—at the opposite pole on the war issue—fashioned its proposals for radical fiscal changes. But in the domestic field, while the reconstruction plan of the Labour Party is detailed and specific in its outline of legislative minima as protection against industrial abuses, it is all but bare of reference to the structure of industrial self-defense and self-government, shop by shop, district by district, industry by industry, to the same end.

Sidney Webb is, in truth, making a last stand fight for the classic interpretation of industrial democracy, where the political state was to be sovereign, owning and conducting the forces of production, and where the unions were to be juniors in the presence of the bearded scientific expert. He tends to discount the new impulse toward workers' control in which the main drive is that labor is not to be a subordinate, but a partner. On the other hand, organized labor has come, as result of the tribunals set up by the war, to appreciate the value to itself of scientific method. In these tribunals the workers often found that they knew only the facts of their own shops or districts and turned increasingly to such authorities as Webb for the wider view.

For the industrial impulse toward producers' control in industry, there is at present no one custodian. In its local manifestations, the shop stewards are forerunners, and in the words of one of the leading labor executives of England—himself a member of a government tribunal—if a John the Baptist rose up among them they would sweep England. In the national manifestations of producers' control, Robert Smillie (of the miners), J. H. Thomas (of the railwaymen) and other industrial unionists are leaders; A. R. Orage, S. G. Hobson, G. D. H. Cole and others are its intellectual inter-

preters. These last have no direct immediate "following" of votes, but their ideas are helping to swing the labor movement more and more to the "left." They aim at a trade union congress (or, in their vocabulary, a National Guild Congress) which will be executive and legislative for man, the producer, while Parliament will execute and legislate for man, the consumer. The state which the Guild-Socialists foresee will be a machinery half industrial, half political (or, in other terms, half on a functional, half on a geographical basis).

The political movement is ill-advised in under-estimating this industrial movement in its newest manifestations. Arthur Henderson has never fully understood what David Kirkwood and the Clyde Workers' Committee were seeking to do. Some of the advocates of workers' control have an equal distrust of political methods for achieving their aims. This distrust is at times revealed in the writings, for example, of Cole and S. G. Hobson. The first labor members of Parliament failed to achieve the large things hoped for and the experience of the rank and file with labor members in the war government has been disillusioning. Political obstructions to labor will precipitate direct action industrially.

It is probable that the course of British labor in its two-fold movement will depend on the adjustment of both impulses to a new and common resultant, just as in the slow movement toward political democracy the organizing faculty of the British people has built up an Empire, while with their ingrained love of personal freedom they have kept fast hold of local self-government. It is in the interplay of these two impulses that we have evidence that British labor is drawing on collectivism, but individualism as well, in endeavoring to strike a new balance between social control and liberty.

As Arthur Henderson has said:—

In opposition and presently, as we believe and hope, in office, labor will seek to build up a new order of society, rooted in equality, dedicated to freedom, governed on democratic principles.

Thus, in the political field, the outstanding lesson of the war to the British worker is that life has been conscripted by the State; therefore, property can be conscripted by the State. The Labour Party believes that taxation of incomes and profits will not yield enough to free the country from its oppressive war debt, and that any attempt to tax food or the other necessities of life will be unjust and ruinous to the masses of the people. It, therefore, demands that a graduated system of conscription of wealth shall be put into operation, to the end that capital shall cumulatively become an instrument of the common welfare.



For the Labour Party would do more than put the accumulations of past generations into the war-pot along with the lives and liberties of this. It proposes to extend the wartime taxation of incomes, profits and inheritances in order to apply them in the name of the nation to the purposes of peace as they were applied in the name of the nation to the purposes of the war. It affirms that the land of the nation should belong to the nation, and it calls at once for the public absorption of the unearned increment of land values.

It believes that the day is ending for political parties dominated by the owners of land and capital. As the economic structure of our time is defined by legislation and administration, British labor intends to play its part in the formulation of legislation and in the responsibilities of administration. There has been an immense increase during the war of industrial discipline under state control. If the state is to become the master, then the workers are determined to exercise an increasing share of control in the state.

"The cause of unrest," said a trade union official at Birmingham, "is that we are trying to fight a great war and at the same time to preserve our individual liberties." And while the British Labour Party would, on the basis of wartime experience, devote the national surplus to the social welfare, retain the railways and other forms of common service in public hands, and expand the control and ownership of mines and raw materials, he would be a rash prophet who would assume that a labor régime would not leave wide areas for voluntary enterprise. Rather it aims at increased industrial initiative by freeing hoarded stores of wealth and untapped sources of energy to the community. It still employs the verbiage of old days in its manifestos, for it has not yet created a language to fit its new conceptions. It was one of the jokes of the June conference of the Labour Party, which adopted the reconstruction plan, that Sidney Webb, who has spent his life in arguing for the socialization of wealth, pleaded on the floor of the convention for the minting of a new term; but his efforts were swept under by the votes of trade unionists who preferred the old socialist phrases to unwonted ones for the things they were groping after.

Similarly, the Labour Party holds that it is the duty of government to find suitable work for all, and, failing this, to provide maintenance for the workers. It has little patience with the notion that it is fear of starvation that makes the world go round; it holds, rather, that premature work, overwork, undernourishment, unemployment slacken the world's production. But this does not mean that British labor favors a lethargic communism. The wartime organization of Britain's man-power makes it believe that it is entirely possible to find work for all; the wartime leap forward in produc-

tivity makes it believe that not only is this possible but that an altogether new level of output and general prosperity can come into being. And not the least basis for its faith is its conviction that if men feel that they are working merely for their week's wages and the profits of private employers, one of the greatest motivations of all is neglected. When men worked in wartime England for the nation's cause, they put their backs into it.

Underneath it all, British labor is determined to shake off bureaucratic interference and regimentation, which the war has revealed as contrary to the fundamental instinct for individual liberty. Labor will continue to oppose a rigid state socialism with devolution of function. Direct sovereignty over their own lives is the genius of the workers' control movement which parallels and tempers the political movement. It is a movement for status—for increasing, not decreasing, the muster of self-dependent Englishmen.

The workers' control movement is not attempting to commandeer factories and put them into the hands of the workers, like the Russian Soviets. It is going ahead one step at a time, first administering workshop conditions, then sharing in the management of the factory process. It is not trying to extemporize executive experience over night. It acts inside its area of competence, but the change it is effecting in the organization of industry is fundamental. Just as, politically, British labor would not make a wholesale conscription of property, but nevertheless plans to nationalize the agricultural land, the mines and the railways, to conscript accumulated wealth on a graduated scale, and to tax income and profits, so industrially, British labor does not set out to take over the entire industrial process at one stroke. Rather, it gives challenge to the old conception which left autocratic power in the hands of one factor in production—the factor of private capital. This is a projection of self-determination in industrial life. It will find expression in no one formula, but will manifest itself experimentally in a hundred different forms whether under public or private ownership. It is, nonetheless, a decisive step toward the integration of economic self-government, by shops, districts and industries, that in time will fairly parallel the forms of civil government from town to nation.

Here, in its turn, the political movement comes in as a tempering force, with its emphasis on the consumers' or national stake in industrial negotiation and arbitration. Under the government's Production Committee, the tribunals include the employers, labor leaders and the public. This is a divergence from old trade union practice when the case was threshed out jointly by employes and employers alone. Thus, under the old scheme there was nothing to prevent the entrepreneurs and the unions from rigging the public. In ship

building plants, for example, the employers might yield to the demand of workers for increase in pay and tack it straightway onto the sale price. In wartime, this was of immediate national concern. It threw open the whole question of how far an industry could cover by economies and lessened profits, a wage increase without a price increase; or how far one given craft could by its monopoly position gouge the public. This danger is present in the Whitley councils; which in turn have been subject to radical criticism as giving equal representation to small bodies of managers and great bodies of workers; an antagonistic, unstable and undemocratic equilibrium which the enhancement of the public's stake in industry would tend to offset and nationalization, as promoted by the miners, to overcome.

The newer communal view is taking hold of the newer leadership in the union movement, and can be counted on to carry throughout the labor world, as against the older narrow craft view. It has manifested itself in concern for all the workers in other industries, purchasers of the product, and for all the workers of the world. The new communal idea in labor policy asserts itself not only in the settlement of labor issues, but in the proposals for the nationalization of basic industries and common services. Characteristic, also, were the resolutions adopted by the British Labour Party in its wartime conferences, repudiating the Paris agreement. Lloyd George did not meet labor's point of view in his statement of December, 1917, as it would have meant a break with dominant elements in the coalition. But neither did he support the Paris agreement in his statement of war aims. He omitted it in deference to the labor sentiment, which held that in the international field no less than at home, privilege must be subordinated to social welfare. Accordingly, labor called for democratic control over raw materials. It called for an international control over those weak and exploitable territories which are the stakes of secret diplomacy. It demanded that there should be no more dumping on the markets of the world of goods produced by sweated labor. And it took its stand against divisive trade alliances, boycotts and the perpetuation, in an economic war after the war, of the forces that had helped let the world in for this war.

With the monopolistic craft type of mind tends to go support of the two party system of trade government (employers and employees), the support of a protective tariff wall behind which they can jointly put up the prices of products and the wages of the craft to the disregard of the rest of the body of workers; the support of schemes for trade harness and economic isolation of competing nations. Its adherents among British trade unionists lend

themselves to what J. A. Hobson calls Prussian-Australianism<sup>1</sup>—a “khaki” party of imperialism, of protective tariffs, colonial exploitation and state aided industries for the investor; plus high wages and paternalistic schemes as bribes for the labor vote.

Henceforth, says Hughes of Australia, the workman must labor at the plow, “with his sword strapped to the handle.” British labor used its two-edged blade to break ground for an altogether different peace from that.

In its wartime international policy, it steadfastly insisted on its principle of democratic appeal first to the common people of the Allies and then to the common people of the enemy. It formulated that appeal and laid it before the workers of the hostile countries. In building its inter-Allied program, labor worked out a new organization. Efforts had been made to create a trade union inter-Allied conference. They failed. Efforts had been made to create a socialist inter-Allied conference. They, too, failed. Finally, cohesion was found by uniting the forces of the trade unions and the socialists in the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conferences. It was in thus harmonizing the two active principles at work in the labor movement, industrial and political, that British organizers displayed their leadership.

The leaders of Britain held their people united through four years of war. France, waging a defensive warfare on its own soil, instinctively reacted as a unit against the invader. And the military power of Germany, drunk with victory and conquest of enemy territory, yet held up triumph to its people as a release from their ring of foes. But Britain's task was more difficult. Uninvaded and with few victories, she held united. Labor leadership shares in the credit for this long-enduring unity. It made the war one for fire-ides as well as chancellories. The workers were at once backers of the war and forerunners of peace.

They freed themselves from the vague internationalism of alien groups which tended to disregard the deep instinct for nationality, and at the same time they refused to permit the passions of war to divert them from their constructive program for an international order. They never blurred the issues of the struggle against Prussian aggression. But they were equally determined that military victory should not be used for territorial aggrandizement and the perpetuation of hate. It is the merit of the British and inter-Allied workers that during war they reached out beyond the war to the fellowship of free peoples.

It was to this effect and in this even tone of justice that inter-Allied labor spoke to the nations of the world, and, in so speaking,

<sup>1</sup>“Democracy After the War,” by J. A. Hobson.



assured the common people of the enemy that they would not exchange one oppression for another, if they overthrew their autocratic governments.

J. W. Ogden, chairman of the Derby Trades Union Congress, said to his fellow delegates:—

Let us lift our minds above the clouds of doubt, suspicion and dissension that have blurred our vision and warped our judgment, and in the higher, clearer and purer atmosphere we shall discern the true goal of our aspirations and ambitions. The industrial Canaan towards which we have wended so long and so laboriously, world brotherhood, may seem farther away to-day than ever. In spite of that, I shall still look towards it as the salvation of the world, and the only hope of the workers.

The British labor movement is an organic growth, which, like everything else in wartime England, has gone through in four years what would ordinarily have required twenty years. The spokesmen and programs of British labor do not voice class hatred. It shares with the government and with enlightened employers in creating constitutionalism in industry: a new spirit and a new machinery. Labor is developing something different from the old-time trade unionism (with its concentration on wages and hours) and the old-time class-conscious Socialism—broader than the one, freer than the other, typically British in its inconsistencies and in its downright competence.

What baffled some American visitors in British labor is what baffles the elderly in the life of Europe to-day: the variety, the wealth of creative impulse, the hearty dissent from custom and tradition; the zest for challenging the very origins of belief, and for shaking the foundations of venerable institutions.

It is an experimental attitude toward life. The spirit of its quest is springy and buoyant and impudent. An *élan* is being recaptured, lost for one hundred years of the factory system. From the ranks of the returned soldiers and the mobilized shops, new leaders will spring up and they will be young.

British labor cannot be charted off into tidy little thought forms. It is a living, growing, and moving thing. Its vitality spills over into many activities. To the observer it seems as unwieldy and top-heavy and split up as the British Commonwealth of which it is an ever-growing part. But under crisis it reveals the same inner coherence as the British Commonwealth revealed under the strain of war. A community of spirit holds British labor together. Back of its machinery of action there is a profound belief. It is a belief in the worth of the individual. And this belief leads to the desire for founding a society where the common man will be at home.



## APPENDIX I

### STATEMENT OF WAR AIMS

AS ADOPTED AT A JOINT CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETIES AFFILIATED  
WITH THE BRITISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS AND THE BRITISH  
LABOUR PARTY AT CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER, ON DECEMBER  
28, 1917

#### I. THE WAR

THE British Labour movement sees no reason to depart from the declaration unanimously agreed to at the Conference of the Socialist and Labour Parties of the Allied Nations on February 14, 1915, and it reaffirms that declaration. Whatever may have been the causes of the outbreak of war, it is clear that the peoples of Europe, who are necessarily the chief sufferers from its horrors, had themselves no hand in it. Their common interest is now so to conduct the terrible struggle in which they find themselves engaged as to bring it, as soon as may be possible, to an issue in a secure and lasting peace for the world.

#### 2. MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

Whatever may have been the causes for which the war was begun, the fundamental purpose of the British Labour movement in supporting the continuance of the struggle is that the world may henceforth be made safe for democracy.

Of all the war aims, none is so important to the peoples of the world as that there shall be henceforth on earth no more war. Whoever triumphs, the people will have lost unless some effective method of preventing war can be found.

As means to this end, the British Labour movement relies very largely upon the complete democratisation of all countries; on the frank abandonment of every form of Imperialism; on

the suppression of secret diplomacy, and on the placing of foreign policy, just as much as home policy, under the control of popularly elected Legislatures; on the absolute responsibility of the Foreign Minister of each country to its Legislature; on such concerted action as may be possible for the universal abolition of compulsory military service in all countries, the common limitation of the costly armaments by which all peoples are burdened, and the entire abolition of profit-making armament firms, whose pecuniary interest lies always in war scares and rivalry in preparation for war.

But it demands, in addition, that it should be an essential part of the treaty of peace itself that there should be forthwith established a Supernational Authority, or League of Nations, which should not only be adhered to by all the present belligerents, but which every other independent sovereign state in the world should be pressed to join; the immediate establishment of such League of Nations not only of an International High Court for the settlement of all disputes between states that are of justiciable nature, but also of appropriate machinery for prompt and effective mediation between states at issue that are not justiciable; the formation of an International Legislature, in which the representatives of every civilised state would have their allotted share; the gradual development, as far as may prove to be possible, of international legislation agreed to by and definitely binding upon the several states, and for a solemn agreement and pledge by all states that every issue between any two or more of them shall be submitted for settlement as aforesaid, and that they will all make common cause against any state which fails to adhere to this agreement.

### 3. TERRITORIAL ADJUSTMENTS

The British Labour movement has no sympathy with the attempts made, now in this quarter and now in that, to convert this war into a war of conquest, whether what is sought to be acquired by force is territory or wealth, nor should the struggle be prolonged for a single day, once the conditions of a permanent peace can be secured, merely for the sake of extending the boundaries of any state.

But it is impossible to ignore the fact that, not only restitution and reparation, but also certain territorial readjustments



are required if a renewal of armaments and war is to be avoided. These readjustments must be such as can be arrived at by common agreement on the general principle of allowing all people to settle their own destinies, and for the purpose of removing any obvious cause of future international conflict.

(a) *Belgium*

The British Labour movement emphatically insists that a foremost condition of peace must be the reparation by the German Government, under the direction of an International Commission, of the wrong admittedly done to Belgium; payment by that Government for all the damage that has resulted from this wrong, and the restoration of Belgium to complete and untrammelled independent sovereignty, leaving to the decision of the Belgian people the determination of their own future policy in all respects.

(b) *Alsace and Lorraine*

The British Labour movement reaffirms its reprobation of the crime against the peace of the world by which Alsace and Lorraine were forcibly torn from France in 1871, a political blunder the effects of which have contributed in no small degree to the continuance of unrest and the growth of militarism in Europe; and, profoundly sympathising with the unfortunate inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine, who have been subjected to so much repression, asks in accordance with the declarations of the French Socialists that they shall be allowed under the protection of the Supernational Authority, or League of Nations, freely to decide what shall be their future political position.

(c) *The Balkans*

The British Labour movement suggests that the whole problem of the reorganisation of the administration of the peoples of the Balkan Peninsula might be dealt with by a Special Conference of their representatives, or by an authoritative International Commission, on the basis of (a) the complete freedom of these people to settle their own destinies, irrespective of Austrian, Turkish, or other foreign dominion; (b) the independent sovereignties of the several nationalities in those districts in which these are largely predominant; (c) the uni-

versal adoption of religious tolerance, the equal citizenship of all races, and local autonomy; (d) a Customs Union embracing the whole of the Balkan States; and (e) the entry of all the Balkan National States into a Federation for the concerted arrangement by mutual agreement among themselves of all matters of common concern.

(d) *Italy*

The British Labour movement declares its warmest sympathy with the people of Italian blood and speech who have been left outside the inconvenient and indefensible boundaries that have as a result of the diplomatic agreements of the past been assigned to the kingdom of Italy, and supports their claim to be united with those of their own race and tongue. It realises that arrangements may be necessary for securing the legitimate interests of the people of Italy in the adjacent seas, but it has no sympathy with the far-reaching aims of conquest of Italian imperialism, and believes that all legitimate needs can be safeguarded without precluding a like recognition of the needs of others or an annexation of other peoples' territories.

(e) *Poland, etc.*

With regard to the other cases in dispute, from Luxembourg on the one hand, of which the independence has been temporarily destroyed, to the lands now under foreign domination inhabited by other races—the outstanding example being that of the Poles—the British Labour movement relies, as the only way of achieving a lasting settlement, on the application of the principle of allowing each people to settle its own destiny.

(f) *The Jews and Palestine*

The British Labour movement demands for the Jews of all countries the same elementary rights of tolerance, freedom of residence and trade, and equal citizenship that ought to be extended to all the inhabitants of every nation. But it further expresses the hope that it may be practicable by agreement among all the nations to set free Palestine from the harsh and oppressive government of the Turk, in order that the country may form a free state, under international guarantee, to which such of the Jewish people as desire to do so may re-

turn and may work out their own salvation, free from interference by those of alien race or religion.

(g) *The Problem of the Turkish Empire*

The whole civilised world condemns the handing back to the universally execrated rule of the Turkish Government any subject people which has once been freed from it. Thus, whatever may be proposed with regard to Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Arabia, they cannot be restored to the tyranny of the Sultan and his pashas.

The British Labour movement disclaims all sympathy with the imperialist aims of governments and capitalists who would make of these and other territories now dominated by the Turkish hordes merely instruments either of exploitation or militarism. If in these territories it is impracticable to leave it to the peoples to settle their own destinies, the British Labour movement insists that, conformably with the policy of "no annexations," they should be placed for administration in the hands of a commission acting under the Supernational Authority or League of Nations. It is further suggested that the peace of the world requires that Constantinople should be made a free port, permanently neutralised, and placed (together with both shores of the Dardanelles and possibly some or all of Asia Minor) under the same impartial administration.

(h) *The Colonies of Tropical Africa*

With regard to the colonies of the several belligerents in tropical Africa from sea to sea—whether including all north of the Zambesi River and south of the Sahara Desert, or only those lying between 15 degrees north and 15 degrees south latitude, which are already the subject of international control—the British Labour movement disclaims all sympathy with the imperialist idea that these should form the booty of any nation, should be exploited for the profit of the capitalist, or should be used for the promotion of the militarist aims of governments. In view of the fact that it is impracticable here to leave the various peoples concerned to settle their own destinies, it is suggested that the interests of humanity would be best served by the full and frank abandonment by all the belligerents of any dreams of an African empire; the trans-

fer of the present colonies of the European Powers in tropical Africa, however the limits of this area may be defined, to the proposed Supernational Authority or League of Nations herein suggested, and their administration under the legislative council of that authority as a single, independent African state, with its own trained staff, on the principles of (1) taking account in each locality of the wishes of the people when these can be ascertained; (2) protection of the natives against exploitation and oppression and the preservation of their tribal interests; (3) all revenues raised to be expended for the welfare and development of the African state itself, and (4) the permanent neutralisation of this African state and its abstention from participation in international rivalries or any future wars.

### *(1) Other Cases*

The British Labour movement suggests that any other territories in which it is proposed that the future safeguarding of pacific relations makes necessary a transfer of sovereignty should be made the subject of amicable bargaining, with an equivalent exchange, in money or otherwise.

## 4. ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The British Labour movement declares against all the projects now being prepared by Imperialists and capitalists, not in any one country only, but in most countries, for an economic war after peace has been secured, either against one or other foreign nation, or against all foreign nations, as such an economic war, if begun by any country, would inevitably lead to reprisals, to which each nation in turn might in self-defence be driven.

It realises that all such attempts at economic aggression, whether by protective tariffs or capitalist trusts or monopolies, inevitably result in the spoliation of the working classes of the several countries for the profit of the capitalists; and the British workmen see in the alliance between the military Imperialists and the fiscal Protectionists in any country whatsoever, not only a serious danger to the prosperity of the masses of the people, but also a grave menace to peace.

On the other hand, if unfortunately a genuine peace cannot be secured, the right of each nation to the defence of its own economic interests, and, in face of the world shortage herein-



after mentioned, to the conservation for its own people of a sufficiency of its own supplies of foodstuffs and raw material cannot be denied.

The British Labour movement accordingly urges upon the Labour parties of all countries the importance of insisting, in the attitude of the Government towards commercial enterprises, along with the necessary control of supplies for its own people, on the principle of the open door, on customs duties being limited strictly to revenue purposes, and on there being no harsh discrimination against foreign countries. But it urges equally the importance, not merely of conservation, but also of the utmost possible development by appropriate Government action of the resources of every country for the benefit not only of its own people, but also of the world, and the need for an international agreement for the enforcement in all countries of the legislation on factory conditions, hours of labour, and the prevention of sweating and unhealthy trades necessary to protect the workers against exploitation and oppression.

#### 5. THE PROBLEMS OF PEACE

To make the world safe for democracy involves much more than the prevention of war, either military or economic. It will be a device of the capitalist interests to pretend that the treaty of peace need concern itself only with the cessation of the struggle of the armed forces and with any necessary territorial readjustments. The British Labour movement insists that in view of the probable world-wide shortage after the war of exportable foodstuffs and raw materials, and of merchant shipping, it is imperative, in order to prevent the most serious hardships and even possible famine, in one country or another, that systematic arrangements should be made on an international basis for the allocation and conveyance of the available exportable surpluses of these commodities to the different countries in proportion not to their purchasing powers, but to their several pressing needs, and that within each country the Government must for some time maintain its control of the most indispensable commodities in order to secure their appropriation, not in a competitive market mainly to the richer classes in proportion to their means, but systematically to meet the most urgent needs of the whole community on the principle of "No cake for any one until all have bread."

Moreover, it cannot but be anticipated that in all countries the dislocation of industry attendant on peace, the instant discharge of millions of munition workers and workers in war trades, and the demobilisation of soldiers—in face of the scarcity of industrial capital, the shortage of raw materials, and the insecurity of commercial enterprise—will, unless prompt and energetic action be taken by the several Governments, plunge a large part of the wage-earning population into all the miseries of unemployment more or less prolonged. In view of the fact that widespread unemployment in any country, like a famine, is an injury not to that country alone, but impoverishes also the rest of the world, the British Labour movement holds that it is the duty of every government to take immediate action, not merely to relieve the unemployment when unemployment has set in, but actually, so far as may be practicable to prevent the occurrence of unemployment.

It therefore urges upon the Labour Parties of every country the necessity of their pressing upon their governments the preparation of plans for the execution of all the innumerable public works (such as the making and repairing of roads and railways, the erection of schools and public buildings, the provision of working class dwellings, and the reclamation and afforestation of land) that will be required in the near future, not for the sake of finding measures of relief for the unemployed, but with a view to these works being undertaken at such a rate in each locality as will suffice, together with the various capitalist enterprises that may be in progress, to maintain at a fairly uniform level year by year, and throughout each year, the aggregate demand for labour, and thus prevent there being any unemployed. It is now known that in this way it is quite possible for any government to prevent, if it chooses, the very occurrences of any widespread or prolonged involuntary unemployment, which, if it is now in any country allowed to occur, is as much the result of government neglect as is any epidemic disease.

## 6. RESTORATION AND REPARATION

The British Labour movement holds that one of the most imperative duties of all governments immediately peace is declared will be the restoration, so far as may be possible, of the homes, farms, factories, public buildings, and means of

communication in France, Belgium, Tyrol and North Italy, East Prussia, Poland, Galicia, Russia, Rumania, the Balkans, Greece, Armenia, Asia Minor, and Central Africa, that the restoration should not be limited to compensation for public buildings, capitalist undertakings, and material property proved to be destroyed or damaged, but should be extended to setting up wage earners and peasants themselves in homes and employments, and that to insure the full and impartial application of these principles the assessment and distribution of the compensation so far as the cost is contributed by any international fund should be made under the direction of an international commission.

But the British Labour movement will not be satisfied unless there is a full and free judicial investigation into the accusations so freely made on all sides that particular governments have ordered, and particular officers have exercised, acts of cruelty, oppression, violence and theft against individual victims for which no justification can be found in the ordinary usages of war. It draws attention in particular to the loss of life and property of merchant seamen and other non-combatants (including women and children) resulting from this inhuman and ruthless conduct.

It should be part of the conditions of peace that there should be forthwith set up a court of claims and accusations, which should investigate all such allegations as may be brought before it, summon the accused person or government to answer the complaint, to pronounce judgment and award compensation or damages, payable by the individual or government condemned, to the persons who had suffered wrong, or to their dependents. The several governments must be responsible, financially and otherwise, for the presentation of the cases of their respective nationals to such a court of claims and accusations.

## APPENDIX II

### MEMORANDUM ON WAR AIMS

AGREED UPON AT THE INTER-ALLIED LABOUR AND SOCIALIST CONFERENCE, CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S. W., FEBRUARY 20-24, 1918

#### I. THE WAR

THE Conference declares that whatever may have been the cause of the outbreak of war, it is clear that the peoples of Europe, who are necessarily the chief sufferers from its horrors, had themselves no hand in it.

The Conference sees no reason to depart from the following declaration unanimously agreed to at the Conference of the Socialist and Labour Parties of the Allied Nations on February 14th, 1915:—

“This Conference cannot ignore the profound general causes of the European conflict, itself a monstrous product of the antagonisms which tear asunder capitalist society and the aggressive policy of colonialism and imperialism, against which International Socialism has never ceased to fight, and in which every Government has its share of responsibility.

“The invasion of Belgium and France by the German armies threatens the very existence of independent nationalities, and strikes a blow at all faith in treaties. In these circumstances a victory for German Imperialism would be the defeat and the destruction of democracy and liberty in Europe. The Socialists of Great Britain, Belgium, France, Italy,<sup>1</sup> and Russia do not pursue the political and economic crushing of Germany; they are not at war with the peoples, but only with the Governments by which they are oppressed. They demand that Belgium shall be liberated and compensated. They demand that the question of Poland shall be settled in accordance with the

<sup>1</sup> The word “Italy” was added February 24th, 1918, at the request of the Italian delegation.



wishes of the Polish people, either in the sense of autonomy in the midst of another State, or in that of complete independence. They demand that throughout all Europe, from Alsace-Lorraine to the Balkans, those populations that have been annexed by force shall receive the right freely to dispose of themselves.

"While inflexibly resolved to fight until victory is achieved to accomplish this task of liberation, the Socialists are none the less resolved to resist any attempt to transform this defensive war into a war of conquest, which would only prepare fresh conflicts, create new grievances, and subject various peoples more than ever to the double plague of armaments and war.

"Convinced that they are remaining true to the principles of the International, the members of the Conference express the hope that the working classes of all the different countries, recognising the identity of their fundamental interests, will before long find themselves united again in their struggle against militarism and capitalist Imperialism. The victory of the Allied Powers must be a victory for popular liberty, for unity, independence, and autonomy of the nations in the peaceful Federation of the United States of Europe and the world."

## 2. MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

Whatever may have been the objects for which the War was begun, the fundamental purpose of the Conference in supporting the continuance of the struggle is that the world may henceforth be made safe for Democracy. Of all the conditions of Peace none is so important to the peoples of the world as that there should be henceforth on earth no more War.

Whoever triumphs, the peoples will have lost unless an international system is established which will prevent war. It would mean nothing to declare the right of peoples to self-determination if this right were left at the mercy of new violations, and was not protected by a Supernational Authority. That authority can be no other than the League of Nations, which not only all the present belligerents, but every other independent state, should be pressed to join.

The constitution of such a League of Nations implies the immediate establishment of an International High Court, not only for the settlement of all disputes between states that are of justiciable nature, but also for prompt and effective

mediation between states in other issues that vitally interest the power or honour of such states. It is also under the control of the League of Nations that the consultation of peoples for purposes of self-determination must be organised. This popular right can be vindicated only by popular vote. The League of Nations shall establish the procedure of international jurisdiction, fix the methods which will guarantee a free and genuine election, restore the political rights of individuals which violence and conquest may have injured, repress any attempt to use pressure or corruption, and prevent any subsequent reprisals. It will be also necessary to form an International Legislature in which the representatives of every civilised state would have their allotted share, and energetically push forward, step by step, the development of International Legislation agreed to by and definitely binding upon the several states.

By a solemn agreement all the states and peoples consulted shall pledge themselves to submit every issue between two or more of them to arbitration as aforesaid. Refusal to accept arbitration or to submit to the settlement will imply deliberate aggression, and all the nations will necessarily have to make common cause, by using any and every means at their disposal, either economic or military, against any state or states refusing to submit to the arbitration award, or attempting to break the world's covenant of peace.

But the sincere acceptance of the rules and decisions of the Supernational Authority implies the complete democratisation in all countries; the removal of all the arbitrary powers who until now have assumed the right of choosing between peace and war; the maintenance or creation of legislatures elected by and intended to express the sovereign right of the people; the suppression of secret diplomacy, to be replaced by the conduct of foreign policy under the control of popular legislatures, and the publication of all treaties, which must never be in contravention of the stipulations of the League of Nations, with the absolute responsibility of the Government, and more particularly of the Foreign Minister, of each country to its Legislature.

Only such a policy will enforce the frank abandonment of every form of Imperialism. When based on universal democracy, in a world in which effective international guarantees against aggression have been secured, the League of Nations

will achieve the complete suppression of force as the means of settling international differences.

The League of Nations, in order to prepare for the concerted abolition of compulsory military service in all countries, must first take steps for the prohibition of fresh armaments on land and sea, and for the common limitation of the existing armaments by which all the peoples are already overburdened; as well as the control of war manufactures and the enforcement of such agreements as may be agreed to thereupon. The state must undertake such manufactures themselves, so as entirely to abolish profit-making armament firms, whose pecuniary interest lies always in the war scares and progressive competition in the preparation for war.

The nations, being armed solely for self-defence and for such action as the League of Nations may ask them to take in defence of international right, will be left free, under international control, either to create a voluntarily recruited force or to organise the nation for defence without professional armies for long terms of military service.

To give effect to the above principles, the Conference declares that the rules upon which the League of Nations will be founded must be included in the Treaty of Peace, and will henceforward become the basis of the settlement of differences. In that spirit the Conference expresses its agreement with the propositions put forward by President Wilson in his last message:—

1st. That each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential justice of that particular case and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent;

2nd. That peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game now for ever discredited of the balance of power; but that

3rd. Every territorial settlement involved in this War must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims among rival states; and

4th. That all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord

and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe, and consequently of the world.

### 3. TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS

The Conference considers that the proclamation of principles of international law accepted by all nations, and the substitution of a regular procedure for the forceful acts by which states calling themselves sovereign have hitherto adjusted their differences—in short, the establishment of a League of Nations—gives an entirely new aspect to territorial problems.

The old diplomacy and the yearnings after domination by states, or even by peoples, which during the whole of the 19th century have taken advantage of and corrupted the aspirations of nationalities, have brought Europe to a condition of anarchy and disorder which have led inevitably to the present catastrophe.

The Conference declares it to be the duty of the Labour and Socialist Movement to suppress without hesitation the Imperialist designs in the various States which, even in this war, have led one Government after another to seek, by the triumph of military force, to acquire either new territories or economic advantages.

The establishment of a system of international law, and the guarantees afforded by a League of Nations, ought to remove the last excuse for those strategic protections which nations have hitherto felt bound to require.

It is the supreme principle of the right of each people to determine its own destiny that must now decide what steps should be taken by way of restitution or reparation, and whatever territorial readjustments may be found to be necessary at the close of the present War.

The Conference accordingly emphasises the importance to the Labour and Socialist Movement of a clear and exact definition of what is meant by the right of each people to determine its own destiny. Neither unity of race nor identity of language can be regarded as affording more than a presumption in favour of federation or unification. During the 19th century theories of this kind have so often served as a cloak for aggression that the International cannot but seek to prevent any recurrence of such an evil. Any adjustments of boundaries



that become necessary must be based exclusively upon the desire of the people concerned.

It is true that it is impossible for the necessary consultation of the desires of the people concerned to be made in any fixed and invariable way for all the cases in which it is required, and that the problems of nationality and territory are not the same for the inhabitants of all countries. Nevertheless, what is necessary in all cases is that the procedure to be adopted should be decided, not by one of the parties to the dispute, but by the Supernational Authority.

Upon the basis of the general principles herein formulated the Conference proposes the following solutions of particular problems:—

(a) *Belgium*

The Conference emphatically insists that a foremost condition of Peace must be the reparation by the German Government, under the direction of an International Commission, of the wrong admittedly done to Belgium; payment by that Government for all the damage that has resulted from this wrong; and the restoration of Belgium as an independent Sovereign State, leaving to the decision of the Belgian people the determination of their own future policy in all respects.

(b) *Alsace and Lorraine*

The Conference declares that the problem of Alsace and Lorraine is not one of territorial adjustment, but one of right, and thus an international problem the solution of which is indispensable if Peace is to be either just or lasting.

The Treaty of Frankfort at one and the same time mutilated France and violated the right of the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine to dispose of their own destinies, a right which they have repeatedly claimed.

The new Treaty of Peace, in recognising that Germany, by her declaration of war of 1914, has herself broken the Treaty of Frankfort, will make null and void the gains of a brutal conquest and of the violence committed against the people.

France, having secured this recognition, can properly agree to a fresh consultation of the population of Alsace and Lorraine as to its own desires.

The Treaty of Peace will bear the signatures of every na-

tion in the world. It will be guaranteed by the League of Nations. To this League of Nations France is prepared to remit, with the freedom and integrity of a popular vote, of which the details can be subsequently settled, the organisation of such a consultation as shall settle for ever, as a matter of right, the future destiny of Alsace and Lorraine, and as shall finally remove from the common life of all Europe a quarrel which has imposed so heavy a burden upon it.

(c) *The Balkans*

The Conference lays down the principle that all the violations and perversions of the rights of the people which have taken place, or are still taking place, in the Balkans must be made the subject of redress or reparation.

Serbia, Montenegro, Rumania, Albania, and all the territories occupied by military force should be evacuated by the hostile forces. Wherever any population of the same race and tongue demands to be united this must be done. Each such people must be accorded full liberty to settle its own destiny, without regard to the imperialist pretensions of Austria-Hungary, Turkey, or other State.

Accepting this principle, the Conference proposes that the whole problem of the administrative reorganisation of the Balkan peoples should be dealt with by a special conference of their representatives or in case of disagreement by an authoritative international commission on the basis of (a) the concession within each independent sovereignty of local autonomy and security for the development of its particular civilisation of every racial minority; (b) the universal guarantee of freedom of religion and political equality for all races; (c) a Customs and Postal Union embracing the whole of the Balkan States, with free access for each to its natural seaport; (d) the entry of all the Balkan States into a Federation for the concerted arrangement by mutual agreement among themselves of all matters of common interest.

(d) *Italy*

The Conference declares its warmest sympathy with the people of Italian blood and speech who have been left outside the boundaries that have, as a result of the diplomatic agree-

ments of the past, and for strategic reasons, been assigned to the Kingdom of Italy, and supports their claim to be united with those of their own race and tongue. It realises that arrangements may be necessary for securing the legitimate interests of the people of Italy in the adjacent seas, but it condemns the aims of conquest of Italian Imperialism, and believes that all legitimate needs can be safeguarded, without precluding a like recognition of the needs of others or annexation of other people's territories.

Regarding the Italian population dispersed on the Eastern shores of the Adriatic, the relations between Italy and the Yugo-Slav populations must be based on principles of equity and conciliation, so as to prevent any cause of future quarrel.

If there are found to be groups of Slavonian race within the newly defined Kingdom of Italy, or groups of Italian race in Slavonian territory, mutual guarantees must be given for the assurance of all of them, on one side or the other, full liberty of local self-government and of the natural development of their several activities.

#### *(e) Poland and the Baltic Provinces*

In accordance with the right of every people to determine its own destinies, Poland must be reconstituted in unity and independence with free access to the sea.

The Conference declares further that any annexation by Germany, whether open or disguised, of Esthonia, Livonia, Courland, or Lithuania would be a flagrant and wholly inadmissible violation of international law.

#### *(f) The Jews and Palestine*

The Conference demands for the Jews in all countries the same elementary rights of freedom of religion, education, residence and trade and equal citizenship that ought to be extended to all the inhabitants of every nation. It further expresses the opinion that Palestine should be set free from the harsh and oppressive government of the Turk, in order that this country may form a Free State, under international guarantee, to which such of the Jewish people as desire to do so may return and may work out their own salvation free from interference by those of alien race or religion.

*(g) The Problem of the Turkish Empire*

The Conference condemns the handing back to the systematically violent domination of the Turkish Government any subject people. Thus, whatever may be proposed with regard to Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Arabia, they cannot be restored to the tyranny of the Sultan and his Pashas. The Conference condemns the Imperialist aims of governments and capitalists who would make of these and other territories now dominated by the Turkish hordes merely instruments either of exploitation or militarism. If the peoples of these territories do not feel themselves able to settle their own destinies, the Conference insists that, conformably with the policy of "no annexations," they should be placed for administration in the hands of a Commission acting under the Supernational Authority or League of Nations. It is further suggested that the peace of the world requires that the Dardanelles should be permanently and effectively neutralised and opened like all the main lines of marine communication, under the control of the League of Nations, freely to all nations without hindrance or customs duties.

*(h) Austria-Hungary*

The Conference does not propose as a War Aim dismemberment of Austria-Hungary or its deprivation of economic access to the sea. On the other hand, the Conference cannot admit that the claims to independence made by the Czecho-Slovaks and the Yugo-Slavs must be regarded merely as questions for internal decision. National independence ought to be accorded, according to rules to be laid down by the League of Nations, to such peoples as demand it, and these communities ought to have the opportunity of determining their own groupings and federations according to their affinities and their interests. If they think fit they are free to substitute a free federation of Danubian States for the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

*(i) The Colonies and Dependencies*

The International has always condemned the Colonial policy of capitalist governments. Without ceasing to condemn it, the Inter-Allied Conference nevertheless recognises the existence of a state of things which it is obliged to take into account.



The Conference considers that the treaty of peace ought to secure to the natives in all colonies and dependencies effective protection against the excesses of capitalist colonialism. The Conference demands the concession of administrative autonomy for all groups of people that attain a certain degree of civilisation, and for all others a progressive participation in local government.

The Conference is of opinion that the return of the colonies to those who possessed them before the war, or the exchanges or compensations which might be effected, ought not to be an obstacle to the making of peace.

Those colonies that have been taken by conquest from any belligerent must be made the subject of special consideration at the Peace Conference, in which the communities in their neighbourhood will be entitled to take part. But the treaty of peace on this point must secure economic equality in such territories for the peoples of all nations, and thereby guarantee that none is shut out from legitimate access to raw materials, prevented from disposing of its own products, or deprived of its proper share of economic development.

As regards more especially the colonies of all the belligerents in Tropical Africa, from sea to sea, including the whole of the region north of the Zambesi and south of the Sahara, the Conference condemns any imperialist idea which would make these countries the booty of one or several nations, exploit them for the profit of the capitalist, or use them for the promotion of the militarist aims of the Governments.

With respect to these colonies, the Conference declares in favour of a system of control, established by international agreement under the League of Nations and maintained by its guarantee, which, whilst respecting national sovereignty, would be alike inspired by broad conceptions of economic freedom and concerned to safeguard the rights of the natives under the best conditions possible for them, and in particular:—

1. It would take account in each locality of the wishes of the people, expressed in the form which is possible to them.
2. The interest of the native tribes as regards the ownership of the soil would be maintained.
3. The whole of the revenues would be devoted to the well-being and development of the colonies themselves.

## 4. ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The Conference is of opinion that the main lines of marine communication should be open without hindrance to vessels of all nations under the protection of the League of Nations. It declares against all the projects now being prepared by Imperialists and capitalists, not in any one country only, but in most countries, for an Economic War, after Peace has been secured, either against one or other foreign nation or against all foreign nations, as such an Economic War, if begun by any country, would inevitably lead to reprisals, to which each nation in turn might in self-defence be driven. The Conference realises that all attempts at economic aggression, whether by Protective Tariffs or capitalist trusts or monopolies, inevitably result in the spoliation of the working classes of the several countries for the profit of the capitalists; and the working class see in the alliance between the Military Imperialists and the Fiscal Protectionists in any country whatsoever not only a serious danger to the prosperity of the masses of the people, but also a grave menace to Peace. On the other hand, the right of each nation to the defence of its own economic interests, and, in face of the world-shortage hereinafter mentioned, to the conservation for its own people of a sufficiency of its own supplies of foodstuffs and raw materials, cannot be denied. The Conference accordingly urges upon the Labour and Socialist Parties of all countries the importance of insisting, in the attitude of the Government towards commercial enterprise, along with the necessary control of supplies for its own people, on the principle of the open door, and without hostile discrimination against foreign countries. But it urges equally the importance, not merely of conservation, but also of the utmost possible development by appropriate Government action of the resources of every country for the benefit not only of its own people, but also of the world, and the need for an international agreement for the enforcement in all countries of the legislation on factory conditions, a maximum eight-hour day, the prevention of "sweating" and unhealthy trades necessary to protect the workers against exploitation and oppression, and the prohibition of night work by women and children.

## 5. THE PROBLEMS OF PEACE

To make the world safe for Democracy involves much more than the prevention of war, either military or economic. It will

be a device of the capitalist interests to pretend that the Treaty of Peace need concern itself only with the cessation of the struggles of the armed forces and with any necessary territorial readjustments. The Conference insists that, in view of the probable world-wide shortage, after the War, of exportable foodstuffs and raw materials, and of merchant shipping, it is imperative, in order to prevent the most serious hardships, and even possible famine, in one country or another, that systematic arrangements should be made on an international basis, for the allocation and conveyance of the available exportable surpluses of these commodities to the different countries, in proportion, not to their purchasing powers, but to their several pressing needs; and that, within each country, the Government must for some time maintain its control of the most indispensable commodities, in order to secure their appropriation, not in a competitive market mainly to the richer classes in proportion to their means, but, systematically, to meet the most urgent needs of the whole community on the principle of "no cake for any one until all have bread."

Moreover, it cannot but be anticipated that, in all countries, the dislocation of industry attendant on Peace, the instant discharge of millions of munition makers and workers in War trades, and the demobilisation of millions of soldiers—in face of the scarcity of industrial capital, the shortage of raw materials, and the insecurity of commercial enterprise—will, unless prompt and energetic action be taken by the several Governments, plunge a large part of the wage-earning population into all the miseries of unemployment more or less prolonged. In view of the fact that widespread unemployment in any country, like a famine, is an injury not to that country alone, but impoverishes also the rest of the world, the Conference holds that it is the duty of every Government to take immediate action, not merely to relieve the unemployed, when unemployment has set in, but actually, so far as may be practicable, to prevent the occurrence of unemployment. It therefore urges upon the Labour and Socialist Parties of every country the necessity of their pressing upon their Governments the preparation of plans for the execution of all the innumerable public works (such as the making and repairing of roads, railways, and waterways, the erection of schools and public buildings, the provision of working-class dwellings, and the reclamation and afforestation of

land) that will be required in the near future, not for the sake of finding measures of relief for the unemployed, but with a view to these works being undertaken at such a rate in each locality as will suffice, together with the various capitalist enterprises that may be in progress, to maintain at a fairly uniform level year by year, and throughout each year, the aggregate demand for labour; and thus prevent there being any unemployed. It is now known that in this way it is quite possible for any Government to prevent, if it chooses, the occurrence of any widespread or prolonged involuntary unemployment; which if it is now in any country allowed to occur, is as much the result of Government neglect as is any epidemic disease.

#### 6. RESTORATION OF THE DEVASTATED AREAS AND REPARATION OF WRONGDOING

The Conference holds that one of the most imperative duties of all countries immediately Peace is declared will be the restoration, so far as may be possible, of the homes, farms, factories, public buildings, and means of communication wherever destroyed by war operations; that the restoration should not be limited to compensation for public buildings, capitalist undertakings, and material property proved to be destroyed or damaged, but should be extended to setting up the wage-earners and peasants themselves in homes and employment; and that to ensure the full and impartial application of these principles the assessment and distribution of the compensation, so far as the cost is contributed by any International Fund, should be made under the direction of an International Commission.

The Conference will not be satisfied unless there is a full and free judicial investigation into the accusations made on all sides that particular Governments have ordered, and particular officers have exercised, acts of cruelty, oppression, violence, and theft against individual victims, for which no justification can be found in the ordinary usages of war. It draws attention, in particular, to the loss of life and property of merchant seamen and other non-combatants (including women and children) resulting from this inhuman and ruthless conduct. It should be part of the conditions of Peace that there should be forthwith set up a Court of Claims and Accusations, which



should investigate all such allegations as may be brought before it, summon the accused person or Government to answer the complaint, to pronounce judgement, and award compensation or damages, payable by the individual or Government condemned, to the persons who had suffered wrong, or to their dependents. The several Governments must be responsible, financially and otherwise, for the presentation of the cases of their respective nationals to such a Court of Claims and Accusations, and for the payment of the compensation awarded.

## 7. INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

The Conference is of opinion that an International Congress of Labour and Socialist organisations, held under proper conditions, would at this stage render useful service to world democracy by assisting to remove misunderstandings as well as the obstacles which stand in the way of world peace.

Awaiting the resumption of the normal activities of the International Socialist Bureau, we consider that an International Congress, held during the period of hostilities, should be organised by a committee whose impartiality cannot be questioned. It should be held in a neutral country, under such conditions as would inspire confidence among all who take part; and the Congress should be fully representative of all the Labour and Socialist Movements in all the belligerent countries accepting the conditions under which the Congress is convoked.

As an essential condition to an International Congress, the Conference is of opinion that the organisers of the Congress should satisfy themselves that all the organisations to be represented put in precise form, by a public declaration, their peace terms in conformity with the principles, "No annexations or punitive indemnities, and the right of all peoples to self-determination," and that they are working with all their power to obtain from their Governments the necessary guarantees to apply these principles honestly and unreservedly to all questions to be dealt with at any official Peace Conference.

In view of the vital differences between the Allied Countries and the Central Powers, the Conference is of opinion that it is highly advisable that the Congress should be used to provide an opportunity for the delegates from the respective countries now in a state of war to make a full and frank statement of their present position and future intentions, and to endeavour

by mutual agreement to arrange a programme of action for a speedy and democratic peace.

The Conference is of opinion that the working classes, having made such sacrifices during the war, are entitled to take part in securing a democratic world peace, and that M. Albert Thomas (France), M. Emile Vandervelde (Belgium), and Mr. Arthur Henderson (Great Britain), be appointed as a Commission to secure from all the Governments a promise that at least one representative of Labour and Socialism will be included in the official representation at any Government Conference; and to organise a Labour and Socialist Conference, in which no country shall be entitled to more than four representatives, to sit concurrently with the official Conference.

The Conference regrets the absence of American representatives from the Inter-Allied Conference, and urges the importance of securing their approval of the decisions reached. With this object in view the Conference agrees that a deputation, consisting of one representative from France, Belgium, Italy, and Great Britain, together with M. Camille Huysmans (Secretary of the International Socialist Bureau), proceed to the United States at once, in order to confer with representatives of the American Democracy on the whole situation of the War.

The Conference resolves to transmit to the Socialists of the Central Empires and of the nations allied with them the Memorandum in which the Conference has defined the conditions of Peace, conformably with the principles of Socialist and International justice. The Conference is convinced that these conditions will commend themselves on reflection to the mind of every Socialist, and the Conference asks for the answer of the Socialists of the Central Empires, in the hope that these will join without delay in a joint effort of the International, which has now become more than ever the best and the most certain instrument of Democracy and Peace.

Finally, the Conference invited the respective Labour and Socialist organisations and parties to demand the necessary freedom of propaganda, both written and oral, in favour of the principles adopted by the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference.

## APPENDIX III

### THE CONSTITUTION OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

AS ADOPTED BY THE PARTY CONFERENCE HELD IN LONDON ON  
FEBRUARY 21, 1918

#### I. NAME

THE Labour Party.

#### 2. MEMBERSHIP

The Labour Party shall consist of all its affiliated organisations,<sup>1</sup> together with those men and women who are individual members of a Local Labour Party and who subscribe to the Constitution and Programme of the Party.

#### 3. PARTY OBJECTS

##### *National*

(a) To organise and maintain in Parliament and in the country a Political Labour Party, and to ensure the establishment of a Local Labour Party in every County Constituency and every Parliamentary Borough, with suitable divisional organisation in the separate constituencies of Divided Boroughs.

(b) To co-operate with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, or other Kindred Organisations, in joint political or other action in harmony with the Party Constitution and Standing Orders.

(c) To give effect as far as may be practicable to the principles from time to time approved by the Party Conference.

(d) To secure for the producers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribu-

<sup>1</sup>Trade Unions, Socialist Societies, Co-operative Societies, Trades Councils, and Local Labour Parties.

tion thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service.

(e) Generally to promote the Political, Social, and Economic Emancipation of the People, and more particularly of those who depend directly upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life.

#### *Inter-Dominion*

(f) To co-operate with the Labour and Socialist organisations in the Dominions and the Dependencies with a view to promoting the purposes of the Party and to take common action for the promotion of a higher standard of social and economic life for the working population of the respective countries.

#### *International*

(g) To co-operate with the Labour and Socialist organisations in other countries and to assist in organising a Federation of Nations for the maintenance of Freedom and Peace, for the establishment of suitable machinery for the adjustment and settlement of International Disputes by Conciliation or Judicial Arbitration, and for such International Legislation as may be practicable.

### 4. PARTY PROGRAMME

(a) It shall be the duty of the Party Conference to decide, from time to time, what specific proposals of legislative, financial, or administrative reform shall receive the general support of the Party, and be promoted, as occasion may present itself, by the National Executive and the Parliamentary Labour Party; provided that no such proposal shall be made definitely part of the General Programme of the Party unless it has been adopted by the Conference by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes recorded on a card vote.

(b) It shall be the duty of the National Executive and the Parliamentary Labour Party, prior to every General Election, to define the principal issues for that Election which in their judgment should be made the Special Party Programme for that particular Election Campaign, which shall be issued as a manifesto by the Executive to all constituencies where a Labour Candidate is standing.



(c) It shall be the duty of every Parliamentary representative of the Party to be guided by the decision of the meetings of such Parliamentary representatives, with a view to giving effect to the decisions of the Party Conferences as to the General Programme of the Party.

#### 5. THE PARTY CONFERENCE

(1) The work of the Party shall be under the direction and control of the Party Conference, which shall itself be subject to the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Party. The Party Conference shall meet regularly once in each year, and also at such other times as it may be convened by the National Executive.

(2) The Party Conference shall be constituted as follows:—

(a) Trade Unions and other societies affiliated to the Party may send one delegate for each thousand members on which fees are paid.

(b) Local Labour Party delegates may be either men or women resident or having a place of business in the constituency they represent, and shall be appointed as follows:—

In Borough and County Constituencies returning one Member to Parliament, the Local Labour Party may appoint one delegate.

In undivided Boroughs returning two Members, two delegates may be appointed.

In divided Boroughs one delegate may be appointed for each separate constituency within the area. The Local Labour Party within the constituency shall nominate and the Central Labour Party of the Divided Borough shall appoint the delegates. In addition to such delegates, the Central Labour Party in each Divided Borough may appoint one delegate.

An additional woman delegate may be appointed for each constituency in which the number of affiliated and individual women members exceeds 500.

(c) Trades Councils under Section 8, clause c, shall be entitled to one delegate.

(d) The members of the National Executive, including the Treasurer, the members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and the duly-sanctioned Parliamentary Candidates shall be *ex officio* members of the Party Conference, but shall, unless delegates, have no right to vote.

## 6. THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

(a) There shall be a National Executive of the Party consisting of twenty-three members (including the Treasurer) elected by the Party Conference at its regular Annual Meeting, in such proportion and under such conditions as may be set out in the Standing Orders for the time being in force, and this National Executive shall, subject to the control and directions of the Party Conference, be the Administrative Authority of the Party.

(b) The National Executive shall be responsible for the conduct of the general work of the Party. The National Executive shall take steps to ensure that the Party is represented by a properly constituted organisation in each constituency in which this is found practicable; it shall give effect to the decisions of the Party Conference; and it shall interpret the Constitution and Standing Orders and Rules of the Party in all cases of dispute subject to an appeal to the next regular Annual Meeting of the Party Conference by the organisation or person concerned.

(c) The National Executive shall confer with the Parliamentary Labour Party at the opening of each Parliamentary Session, and also at any other time when the National Executive or the Parliamentary Party may desire such conference, on any matters relating to the work and progress of the Party, or to the efforts necessary to give effect to the General Programme of the Party.

## 7. PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES

(a) The National Executive shall co-operate with the Local Labour Party in any constituency with a view to nominating a Labour Candidate at any Parliamentary General or Bye-Election. Before any Parliamentary Candidate can be regarded as finally adopted for a constituency as a Candidate of the Labour Party, his candidature must be sanctioned by the National Executive.

(b) Candidates approved by the National Executive shall appear before their constituencies under the designation of "Labour Candidate" only. At any General Election they shall include in their Election Addresses and give prominence in their campaigns to the issues for that Election as defined by the National Executive from the General Party Programme. If

they are elected they shall act in harmony with the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Party in seeking to discharge the responsibilities established by Parliamentary practise.

(c) Party Candidates shall receive financial assistance for election expenditure from the Party funds on the following basis:—

Borough Constituencies, £1 per 1,000 electors.

County Divisions, £1 15s. per 1,000 electors.

#### 8. AFFILIATION FEES

(1) Trade Unions, Socialist Societies, Co-operative Societies, and other organisations directly affiliated to the Party (but not being affiliated Local Labour Parties or Trades Councils) shall pay 2d. per member per annum to the Central Party Funds with a minimum of 30s.

The membership of a Trade Union for the purpose of this clause shall be those members contributing to the political fund of the Union established under the Trade Union Act, 1913.

(2) The affiliation of Trades Councils will be subject to the following conditions:—

(a) Where Local Labour Parties and Trades Councils at present exist in the same area every effort must be made to amalgamate these bodies, retaining in one organisation the industrial and political functions, and incorporating the constitution and rules for Local Labour Parties in the rules of the amalgamated body.

(b) Where no Local Labour Party is in existence and the Trades Council is discharging the political functions, such Trades Council shall be eligible for affiliation as a Local Labour Party, providing that its rules and title be extended so as to include Local Labour Party functions.

(c) Where a Local Labour Party and a Trades Council exist in the same area, the Trades Council shall be eligible to be affiliated to the Local Labour Party, but not to the National Party, except in such cases where the Trades Council was affiliated to the National Party prior to November 1st, 1917. In these cases the Executive Committee shall have power to continue national affiliations on such conditions as may be deemed necessary.

(d) Trades Councils included under Section (c) shall pay an annual affiliation fee of 30s.

Local Labour Parties must charge individually enrolled members, male a minimum of 1s. per annum, female 6d. per annum; and 2d. per member so collected must be remitted to the Central Office with a minimum of 30s., as the affiliation fee of such Local Labour Party.

In addition to these payments, a delegation fee of 5s. to the Party Conference or any Special Conference may be charged.

## APPENDIX IV

### LABOUR AND THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

A DRAFT REPORT ON RECONSTRUCTION SUBMITTED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY AT THE 17TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, NOTTINGHAM, JAN. 23-25, 1918

It behooves the Labour Party, in formulating its own programme for Reconstruction after the war, and in criticising the various preparations and plans that are being made by the present Government, to look at the problem as a whole. We have to make clear what it is that we wish to construct. It is important to emphasise the fact that, whatever may be the case with regard to other political parties, our detailed practical proposals proceed from definitely held principles.

#### THE END OF A CIVILISATION

We need to beware of patchwork. The view of the Labour Party is that what has to be reconstructed after the war is not this or that Government Department, or this or that piece of social machinery; but, so far as Britain is concerned, society itself. The individual worker, or for that matter the individual statesman, immersed in daily routine—like the individual soldier in a battle—easily fails to understand the magnitude and far-reaching importance of what is taking place around him. How does it fit together as a whole? How does it look from a distance? Count Okuma, one of the oldest, most experienced and ablest of the statesmen of Japan, watching the present conflict from the other side of the globe, declares it to be nothing less than the death of European civilisation. Just as in the past the civilisations of Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Carthage and the great Roman Empire have been successively destroyed, so, in the judgment of this detached observer, the civilisation of all Europe is even now receiving its death-blow. We of the



Labour Party can so far agree in this estimate as to recognise, in the present world catastrophe, if not the death, in Europe, of civilisation itself, at any rate the culmination and collapse of a distinctive industrial civilisation, which the workers will not seek to reconstruct. At such times of crisis it is easier to slip into ruin than to progress into higher forms of organisation. That is the problem as it presents itself to the Labour Party to-day.

What this war is consuming is not merely the security, the homes, the livelihood and the lives of millions of innocent families, and an enormous proportion of all the accumulated wealth of the world, but also the very basis of the peculiar social order in which it has arisen. The individualist system of capitalist production, based on the private ownership and competitive administration of land and capital, with its reckless "profiteering" and wage slavery; with its glorification of the unhampered struggle for the means of life and its hypocritical pretence of the "survival of the fittest"; with the monstrous inequality of circumstances which it produces and the degradation and brutalisation, both moral and spiritual, resulting therefrom, may, we hope, indeed have received a death-blow. With it must go the political system and ideas in which it naturally found expression. We of the Labour Party, whether in opposition or in due time called upon to form an Administration, will certainly lend no hand to its revival. On the contrary, we shall do our utmost to see that it is buried with the millions whom it has done to death. If we in Britain are to escape from the decay of civilisation itself, which the Japanese statesman foresees, we must ensure that what is presently to be built up is a new social order, based not on fighting but on fraternity—not on the competitive struggle for the means of bare life, but on a deliberately planned co-operation in production and distribution for the benefit of all who participate by hand or by brain—not on the utmost possible inequality of riches, but on a systematic approach towards a healthy equality of material circumstances for every person born into the world—not on an enforced dominion over subject nations, subject races, subject Colonies, subject classes, or a subject sex, but, in industry as well as in government, on that equal freedom, that general consciousness of consent, and that widest possible participation in power, both economic and political, which is characteristic of Democracy. We do not, of course, pretend

that it is possible, even after the drastic clearing away that is now going on, to build society anew in a year or two of feverish "Reconstruction." What the Labour Party intends to satisfy itself about is that each brick that it helps to lay shall go to erect the structure that it intends, and no other.

#### THE PILLARS OF THE HOUSE

We need not here recapitulate, one by one, the different items in the Labour Party's programme, which successive Party Conferences have adopted. These proposals, some of them in various publications worked out in practical detail, are often carelessly derided as impracticable, even by the politicians who steal them piecemeal from us! The members of the Labour Party, themselves actually working by hand or by brain, in close contact with the facts, have perhaps at all times a more accurate appreciation of what is practicable, in industry as in politics, than those who depend solely on academic instruction or are biased by great possessions. But to-day no man dares to say that anything is impracticable. The war, which has scared the old Political Parties right out of their dogmas, has taught every statesman and every Government official, to his enduring surprise, how very much more can be done along the lines that we have laid down than he had ever before thought possible. What we now promulgate as our policy, whether for opposition or for office, is not merely this or that specific reform, but a deliberately thought out, systematic, and comprehensive plan for that immediate social rebuilding which any Ministry, whether or not it desires to grapple with the problem, will be driven to undertake. The Four Pillars of the House that we propose to erect, resting upon the common foundation of the Democratic control of society in all its activities, may be termed, respectively:

- (a) The Universal Enforcement of the National Minimum;
- (b) The Democratic Control of Industry;
- (c) The Revolution in National Finance; and
- (d) The Surplus Wealth for the Common Good.

The various detailed proposals of the Labour Party, herein briefly summarised, rest on these four pillars, and can best be appreciated in connection with them.

## THE UNIVERSAL ENFORCEMENT OF A NATIONAL MINIMUM

The first principle of the Labour Party—in significant contrast with those of the Capitalist System, whether expressed by the Liberal or by the Conservative Party—is the securing to every member of the community, in good times and bad alike (and not only to the strong and able, the well-born or the fortunate), of all the requisites of healthy life and worthy citizenship. This is in no sense a “class” proposal. Such an amount of social protection of the individual, however poor and lowly, from birth to death, is, as the economist now knows, as indispensable to fruitful co-operation as it is to successful combination; and it affords the only complete safeguard against that insidious Degradation of the Standard of Life, which is the worst economic and social calamity to which any community can be subjected. We are members one of another. No man liveth to himself alone. If any, even the humblest, is made to suffer, the whole community and every one of us, whether or not we recognise the fact, is thereby injured. Generation after generation this has been the corner-stone of the faith of Labour. It will be the guiding principle of any Labour Government.

*The Legislative Regulation of Employment*

Thus it is that the Labour Party to-day stands for the universal application of the Policy of the National Minimum, to which (as embodied in the successive elaborations of the Factory, Mines, Railways, Shops, Merchant Shipping, and Truck Acts, the Public Health, Housing, and Education Acts and the Minimum Wage Act—all of them aiming at the enforcement of at least the prescribed Minimum of Leisure, Health, Education, and Subsistence) the spokesmen of Labour have already gained the support of the enlightened statesmen and economists of the world. All these laws purporting to protect against extreme Degradation of the Standard of Life need considerable improvement and extension, whilst their administration leaves much to be desired. For instance, the Workmen’s Compensation Act fails, shamefully, not merely to secure proper provision for all the victims of accident and industrial disease, but what is much more important, does not succeed in preventing their continual increase. The amendment and con-

solidation of the Factories and Workshops Acts, with their extension to all employed persons, is long overdue, and it will be the policy of Labour greatly to strengthen the staff of inspectors, especially by the addition of more men and women of actual experience of the workshop and the mine. The Coal Mines (Minimum Wage) Act must certainly be maintained in force, and suitably amended, so as both to ensure greater uniformity of conditions among the several districts, and to make the District Minimum in all cases an effective reality. The same policy will, in the interests of the agricultural labourers, dictate the perpetuation of the Legal Wage clauses of the new Corn Law just passed for a term of five years, and the prompt amendment of any defects that may be revealed in their working. And, in view of the fact that many millions of wage-earners, notably women and the less skilled workmen in various occupations, are unable by combination to obtain wages adequate for decent maintenance in health, the Labour Party intends to see to it that the Trade Boards Act is suitably amended and made to apply to all industrial employments in which any considerable number of those employed obtain less than 30s. per week. This minimum of not less than 30s. per week (which will need revision according to the level of prices) ought to be the very lowest statutory base line for the least skilled adult workers, men or women, in any occupation, in all parts of the United Kingdom.

### *The Organisation of Demobilisation*

But the coming industrial dislocation, which will inevitably follow the discharge from war service of half of all the working population, imposes new obligations upon the community. The demobilisation and discharge of the eight million wage-earners now being paid from public funds, either for service with the Colours or in munition work and other war trades, will bring to the whole wage-earning class grave peril of Unemployment, Reduction of Wages, and a lasting Degradation of the Standard of Life, which can be prevented only by deliberate National Organisation. The Labour Party has repeatedly called upon the present Government to formulate its plan, and to make in advance all arrangements necessary for coping with so unparalleled a dislocation. The policy to which the Labour Party commits itself is unhesitating and uncompromising. It



is plain that regard should be had, in stopping Government orders, reducing the staff of the National Factories and demobilising the Army, to the actual state of employment in particular industries and in different districts, so as both to release first the kinds of labour most urgently required for the revival of peace production, and to prevent any congestion of the market. It is no less imperative that suitable provision against being turned suddenly adrift without resources should be made, not only for the soldiers, but also for the three million operatives in munition work and other war trades, who will be discharged long before most of the Army can be disbanded. On this important point, which is the most urgent of all, the present Government has, we believe, down to the present hour, formulated no plan, and come to no decision, and neither the Liberal nor the Conservative Party has apparently deemed the matter worthy of agitation. Any Government which should allow the discharged soldier or munition worker to fall into the clutches of charity or the Poor Law would have to be instantly driven from office by an outburst of popular indignation. What every one of them who is not wholly disabled will look for is a situation in accordance with his capacity.

#### *Securing Employment for All*

The Labour Party insists—as no other political party has thought fit to do—that the obligation to find suitable employment in productive work for all these men and women rests upon the Government for the time being. The work of re-settling the disbanded soldiers and discharged munition workers into new situations is a national obligation; and the Labour Party emphatically protests against it being regarded as a matter for private charity. It strongly objects to this public duty being handed over either to committees of philanthropists or benevolent societies, or to any of the military or recruiting authorities. The policy of the Labour Party in this matter is to make the utmost use of the Trade Unions, and, equally for the brain-workers, of the various Professional Associations. In view of the fact that, in any trade, the best organisation for placing men in situations is a national Trade Union having local Branches throughout the kingdom, every soldier should be allowed, if he chooses, to have a duplicate of his industrial discharge notice sent, one month before the date fixed for his

discharge, to the Secretary of the Trade Union to which he belongs or wishes to belong. Apart from this use of the Trade Union (and a corresponding use of the Professional Association) the Government must, of course, avail itself of some such public machinery as that of the Employment Exchanges; but before the existing Exchanges (which will need to be greatly extended) can receive the co-operation and support of the organised Labour Movement, without which their operations can never be fully successful, it is imperative that they should be drastically reformed, on the lines laid down in the Demobilisation Report of the "Labour After the War" Joint Committee; and, in particular, that each Exchange should be placed effectively under the supervision and control of a Joint Committee of Employers and Trade Unionists in equal numbers.

The responsibility of the Government for the time being, in the grave industrial crisis that demobilisation will produce, goes, however, far beyond the eight million men and women whom the various Departments will suddenly discharge from their own service. The effect of this peremptory discharge on all the other workers has also to be taken into account. To the Labour Party it will seem the supreme concern of the Government of the day to see to it that there shall be, as a result of the gigantic "General Post" which it will itself have deliberately set going, nowhere any Degradation of the Standard of Life. The Government has pledged itself to restore the Trade Union conditions and "pre-war practices" of the workshop, which the Trade Unions patriotically gave up at the direct request of the Government itself; and this solemn pledge must be fulfilled, of course, in the spirit as well as in the letter. The Labour Party, moreover, holds it to be the duty of the Government of the day to take all necessary steps to prevent the Standard Rates of Wages, in any trade or occupation whatsoever, from suffering any reduction, relatively to the contemporary cost of living. Unfortunately, the present Government, like the Liberal and Conservative Parties, so far refuses to speak on this important matter with any clear voice. We claim that it should be a cardinal point of Government policy to make it plain to every capitalist employer that any attempt to reduce the customary rates of wages when peace comes, or to take advantage of the dislocation of demobilisation to worsen the conditions of employment in any grade

whatsoever, will certainly lead to embittered industrial strife, which will be in the highest degree detrimental to the national interests; and that the Government of the day will not hesitate to take all necessary steps to avert such a calamity. In the great impending crisis the Government of the day should not only, as the greatest employer of both brainworkers and manual workers, set a good example in this respect, but should also actively seek to influence private employers by proclaiming in advance that it will not itself attempt to lower the Standard Rates of conditions in public employment; by announcing that it will insist on the most rigorous observance of the Fair Wages Clause in all public contracts, and by explicitly recommending every Local Authority to adopt the same policy.

But nothing is more dangerous to the Standard of Life, or so destructive of those minimum conditions of healthy existence, which must in the interests of the community be assured to every worker, than any widespread or continued unemployment. It has always been a fundamental principle of the Labour Party (a point on which, significantly enough, it has not been followed by either of the other political parties), that, in a modern industrial community, it is one of the foremost obligations of the Government to find, for every willing worker, whether by hand or by brain, productive work at Standard Rates.

It is accordingly the duty of the Government to adopt a policy of deliberately and systematically preventing the occurrence of unemployment, instead of (as heretofore) letting unemployment occur, and then seeking, vainly and expensively, to relieve the unemployed. It is now known that the Government can, if it chooses, arrange the public works and the orders of National Departments and Local Authorities in such a way as to maintain the aggregate demand for labour in the whole kingdom (including that of capitalist employers) approximately at a uniform level from year to year; and it is therefore a primary obligation of the Government to prevent any considerable or widespread fluctuations in the total numbers employed in times of good or bad trade. But this is not all. In order to prepare for the possibility of there being any unemployment, either in the course of demobilisation or in the first years of peace, it is essential that the Government should make all necessary preparations for putting instantly in hand, directly or through the Local Authorities, such urgently needed public works as

(a) the rehousing of the population alike in rural districts, mining villages, and town slums, to the extent, possibly, of a million new cottages and an outlay of 300 millions sterling; (b) the immediate making-good of the shortage of schools, training colleges, technical colleges, &c., and the engagement of the necessary additional teaching, clerical, and administrative staffs; (c) new roads; (d) light railways; (e) the unification and re-organisation of the railway and canal system; (f) afforestation; (g) the reclamation of land; (h) the development and better equipment of our ports and harbours; (i) the opening of access to land by co-operative small holdings and in other practicable ways. Moreover, in order to relieve any pressure of an overstocked labour market, the opportunity should be taken, if unemployment should threaten to become widespread, (a) immediately to raise the school-leaving age to sixteen; (b) greatly to increase the number of scholarships and bursaries for Secondary and Higher Education; and (c) substantially to shorten the hours of labour of all young persons, even to a greater extent than the eight hours per week contemplated in the new Education Bill, in order to enable them to attend technical and other classes in the daytime. Finally, wherever practicable, the hours of adult labour should be reduced to not more than forty-eight per week, without reduction of the Standard Rates of Wages. There can be no economic or other justification for keeping any man or woman to work for long hours, or at overtime, whilst others are unemployed.

### *Social Insurance against Unemployment*

In so far as the Government fails to prevent Unemployment—whenever it finds it impossible to discover for any willing worker, man or woman, a suitable situation at the Standard Rate—the Labour Party holds that the Government must, in the interest of the community as a whole, provide him or her with adequate maintenance, either with such arrangements for honourable employment or with such useful training as may be found practicable, according to age, health and previous occupation. In many ways the best form of provision for those who must be unemployed, because the industrial organisation of the community so far breaks down as to be temporarily unable to set them to work, is the Out of Work Benefit afforded by a well-administered Trade Union. This is a special tax on the



Trade Unionists themselves which they have voluntarily undertaken, but towards which they have a right to claim a public subvention—a subvention which was actually granted by Parliament (though only to the extent of a couple of shillings or so per week) under Part II. of the Insurance Act. The arbitrary withdrawal by the Government in 1915 of this statutory right of the Trade Unions was one of the least excusable of the war economies; and the Labour Party must insist on the resumption of this subvention immediately the war ceases, and on its increase to at least half the amount spent in Out of Work Benefit. The extension of State Unemployment Insurance to other occupations may afford a convenient method of providing for such of the Unemployed, especially in the case of badly paid women workers and the less skilled men, whom it is difficult to organise in Trade Unions. But the weekly rate of the State Unemployment Benefit needs, in these days of high prices, to be considerably raised; whilst no industry ought to be compulsorily brought within its scope against the declared will of the workers concerned, and especially of their Trade Unions. In one way or another remunerative employment or honourable maintenance must be found for every willing worker, by hand or by brain, in bad times as well as in good. It is clear that, in the twentieth century, there must be no question of driving the Unemployed to anything so obsolete and discredited as either private charity, with its haphazard and ill-considered doles, or the Poor Law, with the futilities and barbarities of its “Stone Yard,” or its “Able-bodied Test Workhouse.” Only on the basis of a universal application of the Policy of the National Minimum, affording complete security against destitution, in sickness and health, in good times and bad alike, to every member of the community of whatever age or sex, can any worthy social order be built up.

#### THE DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF INDUSTRY

The universal application of the Policy of the National Minimum is, of course, only the first of the Pillars of the House that the Labour Party intends to see built. What marks off this Party most distinctively from any of the other political parties is its demand for the full and genuine adoption of the principle of Democracy. The first condition of Democracy is effective personal freedom. This has suffered so many en-

croachments during the war that it is necessary to state with clearness that the complete removal of all the war-time restrictions on freedom of speech, freedom of publication, freedom of the press, freedom of travel and freedom of choice of place of residence and kind of employment must take place the day after Peace is declared. The Labour Party declares emphatically against any continuance of the Military Service Acts a moment longer than the imperative requirements of the war excuse. But individual freedom is of little use without complete political rights. The Labour Party sees its repeated demands largely conceded in the present Representation of the People Act, but not yet wholly satisfied. The Party stands, as heretofore, for complete Adult Suffrage, with not more than a three months' residential qualification, for effective provisions for absent electors to vote, for absolutely equal rights for both sexes, for the same freedom to exercise civic rights for the "common soldier" as for the officer, for Shorter Parliaments, for the complete Abolition of the House of Lords, and for a most strenuous opposition to any new Second Chamber, whether elected or not, having in it any element of Heredity or Privilege, or of the control of the House of Commons by any Party or Class. But unlike the Conservative and Liberal Parties, the Labour Party insists on Democracy in industry as well as in government. It demands the progressive elimination from the control of industry of the private capitalist, individual or joint-stock; and the setting free of all who work, whether by hand or by brain, for the service of the community, and of the community only. And the Labour Party refuses absolutely to believe that the British people will permanently tolerate any reconstruction or perpetuation of the disorganisation, waste and inefficiency involved in the abandonment of British industry to a jostling crowd of separate private employers, with their minds bent, not on the service of the community, but—by the very law of their being—only on the utmost possible profiteering. What the nation needs is undoubtedly a great bound onward in its aggregate productivity. But this cannot be secured merely by pressing the manual workers to more strenuous toil, or even by encouraging the "Captains of Industry" to a less wasteful organisation of their several enterprises on a profit-making basis. What the Labour Party looks to is a genuinely scientific reorganisation of the nation's industry, no longer deflected by in-

individual profiteering, on the basis of the Common Ownership of the Means of Production; the equitable sharing of the proceeds among all who participate in any capacity and only among these, and the adoption, in particular services and occupations, of those systems and methods of administration and control that may be found, in practice, best to promote, not profiteering, but the public interest.

#### IMMEDIATE NATIONALISATION

The Labour Party stands not merely for the principle of the Common Ownership of the nation's land, to be applied as suitable opportunities occur, but also, specifically, for the immediate Nationalisation of Railways, Mines and the production of Electrical Power. We hold that the very foundation of any successful reorganisation of British Industry must necessarily be found in the provision of the utmost facilities for transport and communication, the production of power at the cheapest possible rate and the most economical supply of both electrical energy and coal to every corner of the kingdom. Hence the Labour Party stands, unhesitatingly, for the National Ownership and Administration of the Railways and Canals, and their union, along with Harbours and Roads, and the Posts and Telegraphs—not to say also the great lines of steamers which could at once be owned, if not immediately directly managed in detail, by the Government—in a united national service of Communication and Transport; to be worked, unhampered by capitalist, private or purely local interests (and with a steadily increasing participation of the organised workers in the management, both central and local), exclusively for the common good. If any Government should be so misguided as to propose, when peace comes, to hand the railways back to the shareholders; or should show itself so spendthrift of the nation's property as to give these shareholders any enlarged franchise by presenting them with the economies of unification or the profits of increased railway rates; or so extravagant as to bestow public funds on the re-equipment of privately-owned lines—all of which things are now being privately intrigued for by the railway interests—the Labour Party will offer any such project the most strenuous opposition. The railways and canals, like the roads, must henceforth belong to the public, and to the public alone.

In the production of Electricity, for cheap Power, Light, and Heating, this country has so far failed, because of hampering private interests, to take advantage of science. Even in the largest cities we still "peddle" our Electricity on a contemptibly small scale. What is called for, immediately after the war, is the erection of a score of gigantic "super-power stations," which could generate, at incredibly cheap rates, enough Electricity for the use of every industrial establishment and every private household in Great Britain; the present municipal and joint-stock electrical plants being universally linked up and used for local distribution. This is inevitably the future of Electricity. It is plain that so great and so powerful an enterprise, affecting every industrial enterprise and, eventually, every household, must not be allowed to pass into the hands of private capitalists. They are already pressing the Government for the concession, and neither the Liberal nor the Conservative Party has yet made up its mind to a refusal of such a new endowment of profiteering in what will presently be the life-blood of modern productive industry. The Labour Party demands that the production of Electricity on the necessary gigantic scale shall be made, from the start (with suitable arrangements for municipal co-operation in local distribution) a national enterprise, to be worked exclusively with the object of supplying the whole kingdom with the cheapest possible Power, Light, and Heat.

But with Railways and the generation of Electricity in the hands of the public, it would be criminal folly to leave to the present 1,500 colliery companies the power of "holding up" the coal supply. These are now all working under public control, on terms that virtually afford to their shareholders a statutory guarantee of their swollen incomes. The Labour Party demands the immediate Nationalisation of Mines, the extraction of coal and iron being worked as a public service (with a steadily increasing participation in the management, both central and local, of the various grades of persons employed); and the whole business of the retail distribution of household coal being undertaken, as a local public service, by the elected Municipal or County Councils. And there is no reason why coal should fluctuate in price any more than railway fares, or why the consumer should be made to pay more in winter than in summer, or in one town than another. What the Labour Party would aim at is, for household coal of standard quality, a fixed



and uniform price for the whole kingdom, payable by rich and poor alike, as unalterable as the penny postage-stamp.

But the sphere of immediate Nationalisation is not restricted to these great industries. We shall never succeed in putting the gigantic system of Health Insurance on a proper footing, or secure a clear field for the beneficent work of the Friendly Societies, or gain a free hand for the necessary development of the urgently called for Ministry of Health and the Local Public Health Service, until the nation expropriates the profit-making Industrial Insurance Companies, which now so tyrannously exploit the people with their wasteful house-to-house Industrial Life Assurance. Only by such an expropriation of Life Assurance Companies can we secure the universal provision, free from the burdensome toll of weekly pence, of the indispensable Funeral Benefit. Nor is it in any sense a "class" measure. Only by the assumption by a State Department of the whole business of Life Assurance can the millions of policy-holders of all classes be completely protected against the possibly calamitous results of the depreciation of securities and suspension of bonuses which the war is causing. Only by this means can the great staff of insurance agents find their proper place as Civil Servants, with equitable conditions of employment, compensation for any disturbance and security of tenure, in a nationally organised public service for the discharge of the steadily increasing functions of the Government in Vital Statistics and Social Insurance.

In quite another sphere the Labour Party sees the key to Temperance Reform in taking the entire manufacture and retailing of alcoholic drink out of the hands of those who find profit in promoting the utmost possible consumption. This is essentially a case in which the people, as a whole, must assert its right to full and unfettered power for dealing with the licensing question in accordance with local opinion. For this purpose, localities should have conferred upon them facilities

- (a) To prohibit the sale of liquor within their boundaries;
- (b) To reduce the number of licences and regulate the conditions under which they may be held; and
- (c) If a locality decides that licences are to be granted, to determine whether such licences shall be under private or any form of public control.

*Municipalisation*

Other main industries, especially those now becoming monopolised, should be nationalised as opportunity offers. Moreover, the Labour Party holds that the Municipalities should not confine their activities to the necessarily costly services of Education, Sanitation, and Police; nor yet rest content with acquiring control of the local Water, Gas, Electricity, and Tramways; but that every facility should be afforded to them to acquire (easily, quickly, and cheaply) all the land they require, and to extend their enterprises in Housing and Town Planning, Parks, and Public Libraries, the provision of music and the organisation of recreation; and also to undertake, besides the retailing of coal, other services of common utility, particularly the local supply of milk, wherever this is not already fully and satisfactorily organised by a Co-operative Society.

*Control of Capitalist Industry*

Meanwhile, however, we ought not to throw away the valuable experience now gained by the Government in its assumption of the importation of wheat, wool, metals, and other commodities, and in its control of the shipping, woollen, leather, clothing, boot and shoe, milling, baking, butchering, and other industries. The Labour Party holds that, whatever may have been the shortcomings of this Government importation and control, it has demonstrably prevented a lot of "profiteering." Nor can it end immediately on the Declaration of Peace. The people will be extremely foolish if they ever allow their indispensable industries to slip back into the unfettered control of private capitalists, who are, actually at the instance of the Government itself, now rapidly combining, trade by trade, into monopolist Trusts, which may presently become as ruthless in their extortion as the worst American examples. Standing as it does for the Democratic Control of Industry, the Labour Party would think twice before it sanctioned any abandonment of the present profitable centralisation of purchase of raw material; of the present carefully organised "rationing," by joint committees of the trades concerned, of the several establishments with the materials they require; of the present elaborate system of "costing" and public audit of manufacturers' accounts, so as to stop the waste heretofore caused by the mechanical inefficiency of the more backward firms; of the

present salutary publicity of manufacturing processes and expenses thereby ensured; and, on the information thus obtained (in order never again to revert to the old-time profiteering) of the present rigid fixing, for standardised products, of maximum prices at the factory, at the warehouse of the wholesale trader, and in the retail shop. This question of the retail prices of household commodities is emphatically the most practical of all political issues to the woman elector. The male politicians have too long neglected the grievances of the small household, which is the prey of every profiteering combination; and neither the Liberal nor the Conservative Party promises, in this respect, any amendment. This, too, is in no sense a "class" measure. It is, so the Labour Party holds, just as much the function of Government, and just as necessary a part of the Democratic Regulation of Industry, to safeguard the interests of the community as a whole, and those of all grades and sections of private consumers, in the matter of prices, as it is, by the Factory and Trade Boards Acts, to protect the rights of the wage-earning producers in the matter of wages, hours of labour, and sanitation.

#### A RÉVOLUTION IN NATIONAL FINANCE

In taxation, also, the interests of the professional and house-keeping classes are at one with those of the manual workers. Too long has our National Finance been regulated, contrary to the teaching of Political Economy, according to the wishes of the possessing classes and the profits of the financiers. The colossal expenditure involved in the present war (of which, against the protest of the Labour Party, only a quarter has been raised by taxation, whilst three-quarters have been borrowed at onerous rates of interest, to be a burden on the nation's future) brings things to a crisis. When peace comes, capital will be needed for all sorts of social enterprises, and the resources of Government will necessarily have to be vastly greater than they were before the war. Meanwhile innumerable new private fortunes are being heaped up by those who have taken advantage of the nation's needs; and the one-tenth of the population which owns nine-tenths of the riches of the United Kingdom, far from being made poorer, will find itself, in the aggregate, as a result of the war, drawing in rent and interest and dividends a larger nominal income than ever be-

fore. Such a position demands a revolution in national finance. How are we to discharge a public debt that may well reach the almost incredible figure of 7,000 million pounds sterling, and at the same time raise an annual revenue which, for local as well as central government, must probably reach 1,000 millions a year? It is over this problem of taxation that the various political parties will be found to be most sharply divided.

The Labour Party stands for such a system of taxation as will yield all the necessary revenue to the Government without encroaching on the prescribed National Minimum Standard of Life of any family whatsoever; without hampering production or discouraging any useful personal effort, and with the nearest possible approximation to equality of sacrifice. We definitely repudiate all proposals for a Protective Tariff, in whatever specious guise they may be cloaked, as a device for burdening the consumer with unnecessarily enhanced prices, to the profit of the capitalist employer or landed proprietor, who avowedly expects his profit or rent to be increased thereby. We shall strenuously oppose any taxation, of whatever kind, which would increase the price of food or of any other necessary of life. We hold that indirect taxation on commodities, whether by Customs or Excise, should be strictly limited to luxuries; and concentrated principally on those of which it is socially desirable that the consumption should be actually discouraged. We are at one with the manufacturer, the farmer, and the trader in objecting to taxes interfering with production or commerce, or hampering transport and communications. In all these matters—once more in contrast with the other political parties, and by no means in the interests of the wage-earners alone—the Labour Party demands that the very definite teachings of economic science should no longer be disregarded.

For the raising of the greater part of the revenue now required the Labour Party looks to the direct taxation of the incomes above the necessary cost of family maintenance; and for the requisite effort to pay off the National Debt, to the direct taxation of private fortunes both during life and at death. The Income Tax and Super-tax ought at once to be thoroughly reformed in assessment and collection, in abatements and allowances and in graduation and differentiation, so as to levy the required total sum in such a way as to make the real sacrifice of all the taxpayers as nearly as possible equal. This would in-



volve assessment by families instead of by individual persons, so that the burden is alleviated in proportion to the number of persons to be maintained. It would involve the raising of the present unduly low minimum income assessable to the tax, and the lightening of the present unfair burden on the great mass of professional and small trading classes by a new scale of graduation, rising from a penny in the pound on the smallest assessable income up to sixteen or even nineteen shillings in the pound on the highest income of the millionaires. It would involve bringing into assessment the numerous windfalls of profit that now escape, and a further differentiation between essentially different kinds of income. The Excess Profits Tax might well be retained in an appropriate form; whilst so long as Mining Royalties exist the Mineral Rights Duty ought to be increased. The steadily rising Unearned Increment of urban and mineral land ought, by an appropriate direct Taxation of Land Values, to be wholly brought into the Public Exchequer. At the same time, for the service and redemption of the National Debt, the Death Duties ought to be regraduated, much more strictly collected, and greatly increased. In this matter we need, in fact, completely to reverse our point of view, and to rearrange the whole taxation of Inheritance from the standpoint of asking what is the maximum amount that any rich man should be permitted at death to divert, by his will, from the National Exchequer, which should normally be the heir to all private riches in excess of a quite moderate amount by way of family provision. But all this will not suffice. It will be imperative at the earliest possible moment to free the nation from at any rate the greater part of its new load of interest-bearing debt for loans which ought to have been levied as taxation; and the Labour Party stands for a special Capital Levy to pay off, if not the whole, a very substantial part of the entire National Debt—a Capital Levy chargeable like the Death Duties on all property, but (in order to secure approximate equality of sacrifice) with exemption of the smallest savings, and for the rest at rates very steeply graduated, so as to take only a small contribution from the little people and a very much larger percentage from the millionaires.

Over this issue of how the financial burden of the war is to be borne, and how the necessary revenue is to be raised, the greatest political battles will be fought. In this matter the Labour Party claims the support of four-fifths of the whole

nation, for the interests of the clerk, the teacher, the doctor, the minister of religion, the average retail shopkeeper and trader, and all the mass of those living on small incomes are identical with those of the artisan. The landlords, the financial magnates, the possessors of great fortunes will not, as a class, willingly forego the relative immunity that they have hitherto enjoyed. The present unfair subjection of the Co-operative Society to an Excess Profits Tax on the "profits" which it has never made—specially dangerous as "the thin end of the wedge" of penal taxation of this laudable form of Democratic enterprise—will not be abandoned without a struggle. Every possible effort will be made to juggle with the taxes, so as to place upon the shoulders of the mass of labouring folk and upon the struggling households of the professional men and small traders (as was done after every previous war)—whether by Customs or Excise Duties, by industrial monopolies, by unnecessarily high rates of postage and railway fares, or by a thousand and one other ingenious devices—an unfair share of the national burden. Against these efforts the Labour Party will take the firmest stand.

#### THE SURPLUS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

In the disposal of the surplus above the Standard of Life society has hitherto gone as far wrong as in its neglect to secure the necessary basis of any genuine industrial efficiency or decent social order. We have allowed the riches of our mines, the rental value of the lands superior to the margin of cultivation, the extra profits of the fortunate capitalists, even the material outcome of scientific discoveries—which ought by now to have made this Britain of ours immune from class poverty or from any widespread destitution—to be absorbed by individual proprietors; and then devoted very largely to the senseless luxury of an idle rich class. Against this misappropriation of the wealth of the community, the Labour Party—speaking in the interests not of the wage-earners alone, but of every grade and section of producers by hand or by brain, not to mention also those of the generations that are to succeed us, and of the permanent welfare of the community—emphatically protests. One main Pillar of the House that the Labour Party intends to build is the future appropriation of the Surplus, not to the enlargement of any individual fortune, but to the Common Good. It is from this constantly arising Surplus (to be

secured, on the one hand, by Nationalisation and Municipalisation and, on the other, by the steeply graduated Taxation of Private Income and Riches) that will have to be found the new capital which the community day by day needs for the perpetual improvement and increase of its various enterprises, for which we shall decline to be dependent on the usury-extracting financiers. It is from the same source that has to be defrayed the public provision for the Sick and Infirm of all kinds (including that for Maternity and Infancy) which is still so scandalously insufficient; for the Aged and those prematurely incapacitated by accident or disease, now in many ways so imperfectly cared for; for the Education alike of children, of adolescents and of adults, in which the Labour Party demands a genuine equality of opportunity, overcoming all differences of material circumstances; and for the organisation of public improvements of all kinds, including the brightening of the lives of those now condemned to almost ceaseless toil, and a great development of the means of recreation. From the same source must come the greatly increased public provision that the Labour Party will insist on being made for scientific investigation and original research, in every branch of knowledge, not to say also for the promotion of music, literature and fine art, which have been under Capitalism so greatly neglected, and upon which, so the Labour Party holds, any real development of civilisation fundamentally depends. Society, like the individual, does not live by bread alone—does not exist only for perpetual wealth production. It is in the proposal for this appropriation of every Surplus for the Common Good—in the vision of its resolute use for the building up of the community as a whole instead of for the magnification of individual fortunes—that the Labour Party, as the Party of the Producers by hand or by brain, most distinctively marks itself off from the older political parties, standing, as these do, essentially for the maintenance, unimpaired, of the perpetual private mortgage upon the annual product of the nation that is involved in the individual ownership of land and capital.

#### THE STREET OF TO-MORROW

The House which the Labour Party intends to build, the four Pillars of which have now been described, does not stand alone

in the world. Where will it be in the Street of To-morrow? If we repudiate, on the one hand, the Imperialism that seeks to dominate other races, or to impose our own will on other parts of the British Empire, so we disclaim equally any conception of a selfish and insular "non-interventionism," unregarding of our special obligations to our fellow-citizens overseas; of the corporate duties of one nation to another; of the moral claims upon us of the non-adult races, and of our own indebtedness to the world of which we are part. We look for an ever-increasing intercourse, a constantly developing exchange of commodities, a steadily growing mutual understanding, and a continually expanding friendly co-operation among all the peoples of the world. With regard to that great Commonwealth of all races, all colours, all religions and all degrees of civilisation, that we call the British Empire, the Labour Party stands for its maintenance and its progressive development on the lines of Local Autonomy and "Home Rule All Round"; the fullest respect for the rights of each people, whatever its colour, to all the Democratic Self-Government of which it is capable, and to the proceeds of its own toil upon the resources of its own territorial home; and the closest possible co-operation among all the various members of what has become essentially not an Empire in the old sense, but a Britannic Alliance. We desire to maintain the most intimate relations with the Labour Parties overseas. Like them, we have no sympathy with the projects of "Imperial Federation," in so far as these imply the subjection to a common Imperial Legislature wielding coercive power (including dangerous facilities for coercive Imperial taxation and for enforced military service), either of the existing Self-Governing Dominions, whose autonomy would be thereby invaded; or of the United Kingdom, whose freedom of Democratic self-development would be thereby hampered; or of India and the Colonial Dependencies, which would thereby run the risk of being further exploited for the benefit of a "White Empire." We do not intend, by any such "Imperial Senate," either to bring the plutocracy of Canada and South Africa to the aid of the British aristocracy, or to enable the landlords and financiers of the Mother Country to unite in controlling the growing Popular Democracies overseas. The absolute autonomy of each self-governing part of the Empire must be maintained intact. What we look for, besides a



constant progress in Democratic Self-Government of every part of the Britannic Alliance, and especially in India, is a continuous participation of the Ministers of the Dominions, of India, and eventually of other Dependencies (perhaps by means of their own Ministers specially resident in London for this purpose) in the most confidential deliberations of the Cabinet, so far as Foreign Policy and Imperial Affairs are concerned; and the annual assembly of an Imperial Council, representing all constituents of the Britannic Alliance and all parties in their Local Legislatures, which should discuss all matters of common interest, but only in order to make recommendations for the simultaneous consideration of the various autonomous local legislatures of what should increasingly take the constitutional form of an Alliance of Free Nations. And we carry the idea further. As regards our relations to Foreign Countries, we disavow and disclaim any desire or intention to dispossess or to impoverish any other State or Nation. We seek no increase of territory. We disclaim all idea of "economic war." We ourselves object to all Protective Customs Tariffs; but we hold that each nation must be left free to do what it thinks best for its own economic development, without thought of injuring others. We believe that nations are in no way damaged by each other's economic prosperity or commercial progress; but, on the contrary, that they are actually themselves mutually enriched thereby. We would therefore put an end to the old entanglements and mystifications of Secret Diplomacy and the formation of Leagues against Leagues. We stand for the immediate establishment, actually as a part of the Treaty of Peace with which the present war will end, of a Universal League or Society of Nations, a Supernational Authority, with an International High Court to try all justiciable issues between nations; an International Legislature to enact such common laws as can be mutually agreed upon, and an International Council of Mediation to endeavour to settle without ultimate conflict even those disputes which are not justiciable. We would have all the nations of the world most solemnly undertake and promise to make common cause against any one of them that broke away from this fundamental agreement. The world has suffered too much from war for the Labour Party to have any other policy than that of lasting Peace.

The Labour Party is far from assuming that it possesses a key to open all locks; or that any policy which it can formulate will solve all the problems that beset us. But we deem it important to ourselves as well as to those who may, on the one hand, wish to join the Party, or, on the other, to take up arms against it, to make quite clear and definite our aim and purpose. The Labour Party wants that aim and purpose, as set forth in the preceding pages, with all its might. It calls for more warmth in politics, for much less apathetic acquiescence in the miseries that exist, for none of the cynicism that saps the life of leisure. On the other hand, the Labour Party has no belief in any of the problems of the world being solved by Good Will alone. Good Will without knowledge is Warmth without Light. Especially in all the complexities of politics, in the still undeveloped Science of Society, the Labour Party stands for increased study, for the scientific investigation of each succeeding problem, for the deliberate organisation of research, and for a much more rapid dissemination among the whole people of all the science that exists. And it is perhaps specially the Labour Party that has the duty of placing this Advancement of Science in the forefront of its political programme. What the Labour Party stands for in all fields of life is, essentially, Democratic Co-operation; and Co-operation involves a common purpose which can be agreed to; a common plan which can be explained and discussed, and such a measure of success in the adaptation of means to ends as will ensure a common satisfaction. An autocratic Sultan may govern without science if his whim is law. A Plutocratic Party may choose to ignore science, if it is heedless whether its pretended solutions of social problems that may win political triumphs ultimately succeed or fail. But no Labour Party can hope to maintain its position unless its proposals are, in fact, the outcome of the best Political Science of its time; or to fulfil its purpose unless that science is continually wresting new fields from human ignorance. Hence, although the Purpose of the Labour Party must, by the law of its being, remain for all time unchanged, its Policy and its Programme will, we hope, undergo a perpetual development, as knowledge grows, and as new phases of the social problem present themselves, in a continually finer adjustment of our measures to our ends. If Law is the Mother of Freedom, Science, to the Labour Party, must be the Parent of Law.

## APPENDIX V

### RESOLUTIONS ON RECONSTRUCTION

ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY,  
LONDON, JUNE 26, 1918

#### I. THE TASK OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

THAT, in the opinion of the conference, the task of social reconstruction to be organised and undertaken by the government, in conjunction with the local authorities, ought to be regarded as involving, not any patchwork jerrymandering of the anarchic individualism and profiteering of the competitive capitalism of pre-war time—the breakdown of which, even from the standpoint of productive efficiency, the war has so glaringly revealed—but the gradual building up of a new social order, based not on internecine conflict, inequality of riches, and dominion over subject classes, subject races, or a subject sex, but on the deliberately planned co-operation in production, distribution and exchange, the systematic approach to a healthy equality, the widest possible participation in power, both economic and political, and the general consciousness of consent which characterise a true democracy; and, further, in order to help to realise the new social order and to give legislative effect to the labour policy on reconstruction, this conference emphasizes the necessity of having in Parliament and the country a vigorous, courageous, independent, and unfettered political party.

#### 2. THE NEED FOR INCREASED PRODUCTION

That the conference cannot help noticing how very far from efficient the capitalist system has been proved to be, with its stimulus of private profit, and its evil shadow of wages driven down by competition often below subsistence level; that the conference recognises that it is vital for any genuine social reconstruction to increase the nation's aggregate annual produc-

tion, not of profit or dividend, but of useful commodities and services; that this increased productivity is obviously not to be sought in reducing the means of subsistence of the workers, whether by hand or by brain, nor yet in lengthening their hours of work, for neither "sweating" nor "driving" can be made the basis of lasting prosperity, but in the socialisation of industry in order to secure

- (a) the elimination of every kind of inefficiency and waste;
- (b) the application both of more honest determination to produce the very best, and of more science and intelligence to every branch of the nation's work; together with
- (c) an improvement in social, political, and industrial organisation; and
- (d) the indispensable marshalling of the nation's resources so that each need is met in the order of, and in proportion to, its real national importance.

### 3. THE MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION OF THE STANDARD OF LIFE

(i.) That the conference holds that it is of supreme national importance that there should not be any degradation of the standard of life of the population; and it insists that it is accordingly the duty of the government to see to it that, when peace comes, the standard rates of wages in all trades should, relatively to the cost of living, be fully maintained.

(ii.) That it should be made clear to employers that any attempt to reduce the prevailing rates of wages when peace comes, or to take advantage of the dislocation of demobilisation to worsen the conditions of Labour, will certainly lead to embittered industrial strife, which will be in the highest degree detrimental to the national interests; and the government should therefore take all possible steps to avert such a calamity.

(iii.) That the government should not only, as the greatest employer of Labour, set a good example in this respect, but should also seek to influence employers by proclaiming in advance that it will not attempt to lower the standard rates or conditions in public employment, by announcing that it will insist on the most rigorous observance of the fair wages clause in public contracts, and by recommending every local authority to adopt the same policy.

(iv.) That one of the most urgent needs of social recon-



struction is the universal application of the principle of the protection of the standard of life, at present embodied in the factories, workshops, merchant shipping, mines, railways, shops, truck, and trade boards acts, together with the corresponding provisions of the public health, housing, education, and workmen's compensation acts; that these imperfectly drafted and piecemeal statutes admittedly require extension and amendment at many points and supplementing by new legislation providing among other industrial reforms for the general reduction of the working week to forty-eight hours, securing to every worker, by hand or by brain, at least the prescribed minimum of health, education, leisure, and subsistence; and that, in particular, the system of a legal basic wage, introduced by the trade boards act, the miners (minimum wage) act, and the wage board clauses of the corn production act, needs to be extended and developed, so as to ensure to every worker of either sex, in any occupation, in any part of the kingdom, as the very lowest statutory base line of wages (to be revised with every substantial rise in prices), not less than enough to provide all the requirements of a full development of body, mind, and character, from which the nation has no right to exclude any class or section whatsoever.

#### 4. THE PROVISION FOR THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

That the conference realises that, as soon as peace is assured the position of the soldier or sailor will be one of great peril; that, whilst his services to the nation will be effusively praised, and promises will be made for a generous provision for his needs, there is only too much reason to fear that, unless a strong and continuous effort is made, both in Parliament and in the localities, administrative parsimony and red-tape will deprive many thousands of what is justly due to them.

The conference accordingly holds that it is imperative that the provision to be made on demobilisation should not only be worked out in detail immediately, but that it should be published for general information, so that omissions may be detected, mistakes rectified, and every one made acquainted with the steps to be taken.

The conference, noting the month's furlough, gratuity, free railway ticket, and a year's unemployment benefit if out of work already promised to the soldier, urges that

(a) there should be no gap between the cessation of his pay and separation allowance and the beginning of his unemployment benefit, and

(b) that this special ex-soldier's unemployment benefit given to all should be additional to any unemployment benefit under the National Insurance act, to which many men are already entitled in respect of contributions deducted from their wages;

(c) that the amount of the unemployment benefit should not be the present starvation pittance of 7s. per week, but at least approaching to the combined separation and rations allowances; and

(d) that, in view of the change in the value of money, the gratuity (which should be made payable through the Post Office Savings Bank) ought to be, for the private, £20.

The conference feels, however, that what the soldiers will most seriously look to is not the sum of money doled out to them, but the provision made for ensuring them situations appropriate to their capacities and desires: it declares that this duty of placing the demobilised soldier within reach of a suitable situation at the trade union standard rate is one for the government itself to discharge, without the intervention of charity or philanthropists.

And the conference demands that the government should at once complete and make known the organization projected for fulfilling this duty, including appropriate arrangements for enabling such of the men as wish it to obtain small holdings, for others to get such training for new occupations as they require, and for all to secure such posts in productive work or service as they are capable of filling, or, in the alternative, to be maintained until such posts can be found.

## 5. THE DISCHARGE OF CIVILIAN WAR WORKERS

That this conference, realising the grave industrial conditions in which demobilisation will take place, demands that the same careful preparation and the same sort of provision should be made in advance for a systematic replacing in situations and for adequate maintenance until situations are found, with regard to the three million civil workers in war trades, and male or female substitutes for men now with the colours, as for the five millions to be discharged from the army.

## 6. THE RESTORATION OF TRADE UNION CONDITIONS

(i.) That this conference reminds the government that it is pledged unreservedly and unconditionally, and the nation with it, in the most solemn manner, to the restoration after the war of all the rules, conditions, and customs that prevailed in the workshops before the war; and to the abrogation, when peace comes, of all the changes introduced not only in the national factories and the 5,000 controlled establishments, but also in the large number of others to which provisions of the munitions act have been applied.

(ii.) That the conference places on record its confident expectation and desire that if any employers should be so unscrupulous as to hesitate to fulfil this pledge, the government will see to it that, in no industry and in no district, is any quibbling evasion permitted of an obligation in which the whole labour movement has an interest.

(iii.) In view of the unsatisfactory character of the provisions in the munitions act dealing with the restoration of trade union customs after the war, the conference calls upon the government to provide adequate statutory machinery for restoration:—

(a) By securing that all provisions in the acts necessary to enforce restoration shall continue in operation for a full year after the restrictive provisions abrogating trade union rules, and giving munitions tribunals disciplinary powers over workmen have been terminated.

(b) By removing all restrictions upon the right of the workmen to strike for the restoration of the customs which have been abrogated.

(c) By limiting compulsory arbitration strictly to the war period and providing fully that the right to prosecute an employer for a failure to restore trade union customs shall continue for a full year after the termination of the restrictive powers in the acts.

(iv.) The conference further calls upon Parliament to limit all restrictive legislation directed against workpeople strictly to the war period, and, subject to the above exceptions, calls for the abrogation of the clauses restrictive of personal liberty in the munitions of war acts and in the defence of the realm acts, immediately upon the conclusion of hostilities.

(v.) The conference, finally, urges that if it is considered

that some of the rules, conditions, and customs are, in the industrial reorganisation that is contemplated, inconsistent with the highest development of production, or injurious to other sections of workers, it is for the government, as responsible for the fulfilment of the pledge, to submit for discussion to the trade unions concerned alternative proposals for securing the standard wage and normal day, protecting the workers from unemployment, and maintaining the position and dignity of the crafts.

#### 7. THE PREVENTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT

That the conference cannot ignore the likelihood that the years immediately following the war will include periods of grave dislocation of profit-making industry, now in this trade or locality and now in that, when many thousands of willing workers will, if matters are left to private capitalism, probably be walking the streets in search of employment; that it is accordingly the duty of the ministry, before demobilisation is actually begun, so to arrange the next ten years' programme of national and local government works and services—including housing, schools, roads, railways, canals, harbours, afforestation, reclamation, etc.—as to be able to put this programme in hand at such a rate and in such districts as any temporary congestion of the Labour market may require; that it is high time that the government laid aside the pretence that it has no responsibility for preventing unemployment; that now that it is known that all that is required to prevent the occurrence of any widespread or lasting unemployment is that the aggregate total demand for labour should be maintained, year in and year out, at an approximately even level, and that this can be secured by nothing more difficult or more revolutionary than a sensible distribution of the public orders for works and services so as to keep always up to the prescribed total the aggregate public and capitalist demand for labour, together with the prohibition of overtime in excess of the prescribed normal working day, there is no excuse for any government which allows such a grave social calamity as widespread or lasting unemployment ever to occur.

#### 8. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

That to meet the needs of individuals temporarily out of work, the Labour Party holds that the best provision is the



out-of-work pay of a strong trade union, duly supplemented by the government subvention guaranteed by Part II, of the insurance act; that the government should at once restore the subvention now withdrawn by one of the least excusable of the war economies; that this subvention ought to be increased so as to amount to at least half the weekly allowance; and that for the succour of those for whom trade union organisation is not available the state unemployment benefit, raised to an adequate sum, should be made universally applicable in all industries and occupations where objection is not taken by the trade union concerned to the compulsory inclusion of its members.

#### 9. THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

That the conference holds that the changes in the position of women during the war, in which they have rendered such good service, and the importance of securing to women as to men, the fullest possible opportunities for individual development, make it necessary to pay special attention in the reconstruction programme to matters affecting women; and, in particular, the conference affirms—

##### *A.—With Regard to Industry on Demobilisation:—*

(i.) That work or maintenance at fair rates should be provided for all women displaced from their employment to make way for men returning from service with the forces or other national work.

(ii.) That full inquiry should be made into trades and processes previously held to be unhealthy or in any way unsuitable for women, but now being carried on by them, with a view to making recommendations as to the conditions of their further employment in such trades.

(iii.) That all women employed in trades formerly closed to them should only continue to be so employed at trade union rates of wages.

(iv.) That trade unions should be urged to accept women members in all trades in which they are employed.

(v.) That the principle of equal pay for similar duties should be everywhere adopted.

*B.—With Regard to Civic Rights:—*

(i.) That all legal restrictions on the entry of women to the professions on the same conditions as men should be abrogated.

(ii.) That women should have all franchises, and be eligible for election to all public bodies (including Parliament), on the same conditions as men.

(iii.) That systematic provision should be made for the inclusion of women in committees or commissions, national or local, dealing with any subjects that are not of exclusively masculine interest.

(iv.) That the present unjust provision of the income tax law, under which the married woman is not treated as an independent human being, even in respect of her own property or earnings, must be at once repealed.

#### IO. THE RESTORATION OF PERSONAL LIBERTY

That this conference regards as fundamental the immediate repeal and abrogation, as soon as the war ends, of the whole system of the military service acts, and of all the provisions of the defence of the realm acts restricting freedom of speech, freedom of publication, freedom of the press, freedom of travel, and freedom of choice of residence or of occupation.

#### II. POLITICAL REFORMS

That the conference reaffirms its conviction that no lasting settlement of the question of political reform can be reached without a genuine adoption of

(a) complete adult suffrage, with not more than three months' residential qualification;

(b) absolutely equal rights for both sexes;

(c) effective provision for absent electors to vote and the best practicable arrangements for ensuring that every minority has its proportionate and no more than its proportionate representation;

(d) the same civic rights for the soldiers and sailors, as for the officers;

(e) shorter Parliaments; and

(f) the complete abandonment of any attempt to control the people's representatives by a House of Lords.

That the conference especially protests against the defects of the representation of the people act of last year, which failed to give votes to women under thirty years of age, denied them the right to sit in parliament, maintained for both sexes an unnecessarily long period of residence as a qualification for the register, ignored the rights of the civilian electors who may be compulsorily away from home on polling day, and omitted any provision which would have prevented the scandal of large sections of the voters remaining unrepresented whilst members are returned to Parliament by a minority of the voting constituency.

It protests, moreover, against civil servants being denied the right, which has long been enjoyed by army and navy officers, without at once resigning their appointments, of offering themselves to the electors as Parliamentary candidates.

This conference calls for the abolition of the House of Lords without replacement of any second chamber. The conference further protests against the disenfranchisement of conscientious objectors.

## 12. IRELAND

That the conference unhesitatingly recognises the claim of the people of Ireland to Home Rule, and to self-determination in all exclusively Irish affairs; it protests against the stubborn resistance to a democratic reorganisation of Irish government maintained by those who, alike in Ireland and Great Britain, are striving to keep minorities dominant; and it demands that a wide and generous measure of Home Rule should be immediately passed into law and put in operation.

## 13. CONSTITUTIONAL DEVOLUTION

That the conference regards as extremely grave the proved incapacity of the War Cabinet and the House of Commons to get through even the most urgently needed work; it considers that some early devolution from Westminster of both legislation and administration is imperatively called for; it suggests that, along with the grant of Home Rule to Ireland, there should be constituted separate statutory legislative assemblies for Scotland, Wales, and even England, with autonomous administration in matters of local concern; and that the Parliament at

Westminster should be retained in the form of a Federal Assembly for the United Kingdom, controlling the ministers responsible for the departments of the federal government, who would form also, together with ministers representing the dominions and India whenever these can be brought in, the Cabinet for Commonwealth affairs for the Britannic Commonwealth as a whole.

#### 14. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

That in order to avoid the evils of centralisation and the drawbacks of bureaucracy, the conference suggests that the fullest possible scope should be given, in all branches of social reconstruction, to the democratically elected local governing bodies; that whilst the central government departments should assist with information and grants in aid, the local authorities should be given a free hand to develop their own services, over and above the prescribed national minimum, in whatever way they choose; that they should be empowered to obtain capital from the government at cost price, and to acquire land cheaply and expeditiously, for any of the functions with which they are entrusted.

The conference holds, moreover, that the municipalities and county councils should not confine themselves to the necessarily costly services of education, sanitation, and police, and the functions to be taken over from the boards of guardians, nor yet rest content with acquiring control of the local water, gas, electricity and tramways, but that they should greatly extend their enterprises in housing and town planning, parks, and public libraries, the provision of music and the organisation of popular recreation, and also that they should be empowered to undertake, not only the retailing of coal, but also other services of common utility, particularly the local supply of milk, where this is not already fully and satisfactorily organised by a co-operative society.

Further, that in view of the great and growing importance of local government, this conference thinks it high time that the councillors should again be required to submit themselves for election, that, on the first election, at any rate, the whole of each council should vacate their seats and the new council be elected on the principle of proportional representation, and that in order to throw the position open to all persons, rich or poor,



all councillors should be provided with payment for any necessary travelling expenses, and for the time spent on the public service.

### 15. EDUCATION

That the conference holds that the most important of all the measures of social reconstruction must be a genuine nationalisation of education, which shall get rid of all class distinctions and privileges, and bring effectively within the reach, not only of every boy and girl, but also of every adult citizen, all the training, physical, mental and moral, literary, technical, and artistic of which he is capable.

That the conference, whilst appreciating the advances indicated by the proposals of the present minister of education, declares that the Labour Party cannot be satisfied with a system which condemns the great bulk of the children to merely elementary schooling with accommodation and equipment inferior to that of the secondary schools, in classes too large for efficient instruction, under teachers of whom at least one-third are insufficiently trained; which denies to the great majority of the teachers in the kingdom, whether in elementary or in secondary schools (and notably to most of the women), alike any opportunity for all-round culture, as well as for training in their art, an adequate wage, reasonable prospects of advancement, and suitable superannuation allowances; and which, notwithstanding what is yet done by way of scholarships for exceptional geniuses, still reserves the endowed secondary schools, and even more the universities, for the most part, to the sons and daughters of a small privileged class, whilst contemplating nothing better than eight weeks a year continuation schooling up to 19 for 90 per cent of the youth of the nation.

The conference accordingly asks for a systematic reorganisation of the whole educational system, from the nursery school to the university, on the basis of

(a) social equality.

(b) the provision for each age, for child, youth, and adult, of the best and most varied education of which it is capable, and with due regard to its physical welfare and development, but without any form of military training;

(c) the educational institutions, irrespective of social class or wealth, to be planned, equipped, and staffed according to their several functions, up to the same high level for elementary, sec-

ondary, or university teaching, with regard solely to the greatest possible educational efficiency, and free maintenance of such a kind as to enable the children to derive the full benefit of the education given; and

(d) the recognition of the teaching profession, without distinction of grade, as one of the most valuable to the community.

#### 16. HOUSING

That the conference, noting the fact that the shortage of habitable cottages in the United Kingdom now exceeds one million, and that the rent and mortgages restriction act is due to expire six months after peace, regards a national campaign of cottage building at the public expense, in town and country alike, as the most urgent of social requirements.

That the attention of the government be called to the fact that, unless steps are taken to insist that the local authorities acquire the necessary sites, prepare schemes, plans, and specifications, and obtain all required sanctions, actually before the war ends there is very little chance of the half-a-million new cottages urgently needed in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales during the very first year of demobilisation being ready for occupation within that time.

That it is essential that the "Million Cottages of the Great Peace," to be erected during the first two or three years after the war ends by the local authorities, with capital supplied by the national government, free of interest, and a grant-in-aid in one or other form at least sufficient to prevent the schemes involving any charge on the rates, should be worthy to serve as models to other builders; and must accordingly be, not only designed with some regard to appearance, not identical throughout the land, but adapted to local circumstances, and soundly constructed, spacious, and healthy; including four or five rooms, larder, scullery, cupboards, and fitted bath but also suitably grouped not more than ten or twelve to the acre; and provided with sufficient garden ground.

#### 17. THE ABOLITION OF THE POOR LAW AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUNICIPAL HEALTH SERVICE

That the conference notes with satisfaction the decision of the government both to establish a Ministry of Health and to abolish the whole system and organisation of the poor law.

It regards the immediate reorganisation, in town and country alike, of the public provision for the prevention and treatment of disease, and the care of the orphans, the infirm, the incapacitated, and the aged needs institutional care, as an indispensable basis of any sound social reconstruction.

It calls for the prompt carrying out of the government's declared intention of abolishing, not merely the boards of guardians, but also the hated workhouse and the poor law itself, and the merging of the work heretofore done for the destitute as paupers in that performed by the directly elected county, borough, and district councils for the citizens as such, without either the stigma of pauperism or the hampering limitations of the poor law system.

It feels that only in connection with such a reorganisation of the local health services—urgently required to meet the dangers attendant on demobilisation—can a Ministry of Health be of effective advantage to the nation.

#### 18. TEMPERANCE REFORM

That the conference records its sense of the great social evil and national waste caused by the excessive consumption of alcoholic liquors, and by the unfortunate intemperance of a relatively small section of the population; that the conference sees the key to temperance reform in taking the entire manufacture and retailing of alcoholic drink out of the hands of those who find profit in promoting the utmost possible consumption; and the conference holds that in conjunction with any expropriation of the private interests the electors of each locality should be enabled to decide, as they may see fit:

(1) to prohibit the sale of alcoholic drink within their own boundaries;

(2) to reduce the number of places of sales, and to regulate the conditions of sale;

(3) to determine, within the fundamental conditions prescribed by statute, the manner in which the public places of refreshment and social intercourse in their own districts should be organised and controlled.

#### 19. RAILWAYS AND CANALS

That the conference insists on the retention in public hands of the railways and canals, and on the expropriation of the

present stockholders on equitable terms, in order to permit of the organisation, in conjunction with the harbours and docks, and the posts and telegraphs, of a united national public service of communications and transport, to be worked, unhampered by any private interest (and with a steadily increasing participation of the organised workers in the management, both central and local) exclusively for the common good.

The conference places on record that if any government shall be so misguided as to propose, when peace comes, to hand the railways back to the shareholders, or should show itself so spendthrift of the nation's property as to give the companies any enlarged franchise by presenting them with the economics of unification or the profits of increased railway rates, or so extravagant as to bestow public funds on the re-equipment of privately-owned lines, the Labour Party will offer any such project its most strenuous opposition.

#### 20. THE NEW ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

With regard to the generation of electricity for the provision, both for the factory and the home, of the cheapest possible power, light and heat, the conference declares that the Labour Party stands for the provision, by the government itself, of the score of gigantic super-power stations by which the whole kingdom could be supplied, and for the linking up of the present municipal and joint stock services for distribution to factories and dwelling-houses at the lowest possible rates.

The conference notifies that the Labour Party will offer the most strenuous opposition to this great national service being entrusted, on any terms whatsoever, to private capitalism.

#### 21. COAL AND IRON MINES

That the conference urges that the coal mines, now under government control, should not be handed back to their capitalist proprietors, but that the measure of nationalisation, which became imperative during the war, should be completed, at the earliest possible moment, by the expropriation on equitable terms of all private interests in the extraction and distribution of the nation's coal (together with iron ore and other minerals).

The conference asks that the supply of these minerals should henceforth be conducted as a public service (with a steadily



increasing participation in the management, both central and local, of the workers concerned), for the cheapest and most regular supply to industry of its chief source of power, the retail distribution of household coal, at a fixed price, summer and winter alike, and identical at all railway stations throughout the kingdom, being undertaken by the elected municipal district, or county council for the common good.

## 22. LIFE ASSURANCE

That the conference declares that, partly as a means of affording increased security to the tens of thousands of policy holders whose bonuses are imperilled by capital depreciation and war risks, and partly in order to free the nation from the burdensome and costly system of the industrial insurance companies, the state should take over (with equitable compensation to all interests affected) the whole function of life assurance, giving in place of the present onerous industrial insurance policies a universal funeral benefit free of charge; putting the whole class of insurance agents in the position of civil servants administering the state insurance business; developing to the utmost the beneficial work of the friendly societies in independence and security, and organising, in conjunction with these societies, on the most approved principles, a safe and remunerative investment of popular savings.

## 23. AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL LIFE

(i.) That the conference regards the present arrangements for the production and distribution of food in this country, and the life to which many thousands of country dwellers are condemned, as nothing short of a national disgrace, and as needing to be radically altered without delay.

(ii.) That it is essential that the government should resume control of the nation's agricultural land, and ensure its utilisation not for rent, not for game, not for the social amenity of a small social class, not even for obtaining the largest percentage on the capital employed, but solely with a view to the production of the largest possible proportion of the foodstuffs required by the population of these islands under conditions allowing of a good life to the rural population and at a price not exceeding that for which foodstuffs can be brought from other lands.

(iii.) That this end can probably best be attained by a combination of

(a) government farms, administered on a large scale, with the utmost use of machinery;

(b) small holdings made accessible to practical agriculturists;

(c) municipal enterprises in agriculture, in conjunction with municipal institutions of various kinds, milk depots, sewage works, etc.;

(d) farms let to co-operative societies and other tenants, under covenants requiring the kind of cultivation desired.

(iv.) That under all systems the agricultural labourer must be secured a healthy and commodious cottage, with sufficient garden ground, the opportunity of getting an accessible allotment, and, when he so desires, a small holding, together with a wage continuously adequate for the requirements of body and mind.

(v.) That the conference suggests that the distribution of foodstuffs in the towns—from milk and meat to bread and vegetables—should, with equitable compensation for all interests expropriated and persons displaced, be taken out of the hands of the present multiplicity of dealers and shopkeepers, and organised by consumers, co-operative societies, and the local authorities working in conjunction.

#### 24. CONTROL OF CAPITALIST INDUSTRY

That the conference insists, especially in view of the rapid development of amalgamations and trusts, on the necessity of retaining after the war, and of developing the present system of organising, controlling, and auditing the processes, profits, and prices of capitalist industry; that the economies of centralised purchasing of raw materials, foodstuffs, and other imports must be continued, and, therefore, the "rationing" of all establishments under a collective control; that the publicity of processes thus obtained has a valuable effect in bringing inefficient firms up to a higher level; that the "costing" of manufacturers' processes and auditing of their accounts, so as to discover the necessary cost of production, together with the authoritative limitation of prices at the factory, the wholesale warehouse and the retail shop, affords, in industries not nationalised, the only security against the extortion of profiteering; and that it is as much the duty of the govern-

ment to protect the consumer by limiting prices as it is to protect the factory operative from unhealthy conditions, or the householder from the burglar.

## 25. NATIONAL FINANCE

1. That in view of the enormous debts contracted during the war, and of the necessity to lighten national financial burdens, this conference demands that an equitable system of conscription of accumulated wealth should be put into operation forthwith, with exemption for fortunes below £1,000, and a graduated scale of rates for larger totals, believing that no system of taxation only of income or profits will yield enough to free the country from oppressive debts, and that any attempt to tax food or the other necessities of life would be unjust and ruinous to the masses of the people.

2. That the only solution of the difficulties that have arisen is a system by which the necessary national income shall be derived mainly from direct taxation alike of land and accumulated wealth, and of income and profits, together with suitable imposts upon luxuries, and that the death duties and the taxation upon unearned incomes should be substantially increased and equitably regarded.

3. That the whole system of land taxation should be revised so that by the direct taxation of the unearned increment of land values effect should be given to the fact that the land of the nation, which has been defended by the lives and sufferings of its people, shall belong to the nation, and be used for the nation's benefit.

4. That this conference emphatically protests against the subjection of co-operative dividends to the excess profits tax and against the repeated attempts to bring co-operative dividends within the scope of the income tax.

5. That as during the war the government has had to come to the assistance of the banking institutions of the country, and that it has been found necessary to pay very high rates for the money raised, adding considerably to the annual burden resulting from the war, whilst the banks are now pursuing a policy of fusion such as brings them near to the position of a monopoly, the Post Office Savings Bank should be developed into a national banking system for the common service of the whole community.

## 26. THE NEED FOR A "PEACE BOOK"

That in the opinion of this conference the problem of the social and industrial reconstruction of Great Britain after the war is of such grave importance and of such vital urgency, that it is imperative, in order to avoid confusion in the period of demobilisation, that the main outlines of policy in all branches should be definitely formulated, upon the responsibility of the minister of reconstruction, before the war ends, so that they can be published in a Peace Book for public criticism before being finally adopted by the Cabinet, for the authoritative guidance of all ministers and heads of departments.

## 27. "LABOUR AND THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER"

That the draft report on reconstruction, entitled Labour and the New Social Order, be revised after consideration of all the amendments suggested, and in accordance with the decisions of the conference, and that every constituent organisation be asked to report within four weeks how many copies it proposes to order for distribution to its branches and members.



## APPENDIX VI

### PLATFORM OF BRITISH LABOUR PARTY IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS, DECEMBER, 1918

UNDER the new constitution of the Labour Party it is the duty of the National Executive in conjunction with the Labour Party members of Parliament to define before any general election the particular issues which should be made the party programme. Following is the text of the resolution passed by an emergency conference November 14, 1918, summarising the reconstruction policy of the party as embodied in the revised edition of the pamphlet "Labour and the Social Order":

#### INTERNATIONAL

Now that peace is at hand, the Labour Party feels justified in putting forward its demand that the promise made when its members joined the last Coalition Government in December, 1916, that Labour should have representation at the official Peace Congress, should be redeemed. It reaffirms the declaration of the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conferences of February and September, 1918, that because of their response in defence of the principles of freedom the peoples have earned the right to wipe out all vestiges of the old idea that the Government belongs to or constitutes "a governing class." In determining issues that will vitally affect the lives and welfare of millions of wage-earners, justice requires that they should have direct representation in the Conferences authorised to make such decisions.

In common with the other Labour and Socialist organisations in the Allied countries, Labour also declared in favour of a World Labour Congress at the conclusion of hostilities with a view to the foundations of an effective League of Nations being laid upon a genuine democratic basis, and also in view of the need for an international agreement for the enforce-

ment in all countries of uniform legislation on factory conditions, maximum working hours, the prevention of sweating and unhealthy trades, and similar industrial reforms.

The Executive Committee, therefore, recommend that the Emergency Conference should adopt the following resolution:—

“That this Special Emergency Conference of the Labour Party reaffirms the demand of the Inter-Allied Conferences of February and September, 1918—

“(1) That, in the official delegations from each of the belligerent countries which formulate the Peace Treaty, the workers should have direct official representation.

“(2) That a World Labour Congress should be held at the same time and place as the Peace Conference that will formulate the Peace Treaty closing the war.

“(3) That this Conference demands that the Government should afford facilities for the fulfilment of the above proposals.”

#### NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

The Labour Party protests against any patching up of the old economic order. It declines to go back to the conditions of penury and starvation which were all that society used to allow to millions of workers. It stands for such a systematic reconstruction of industrial and social relations as will give to the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their labour.

The Labour Party demands the wide measures of reform that are described in “Labour and the New Social Order,” which include:—

1. A just and generous provision for the discharged soldiers and sailors, apart from either charity or the Poor Law, alike in respect of pensions, medical and surgical treatment, reinstatement in civil employment at trade union rates of wages, and complete security against involuntary unemployment.

2. Full provision for the civil war workers to be discharged on the conclusion of the war, and others whom the dislocation of industry will throw out of work, including adequate arrangements for placing in new situations as soon as possible and maintenance during involuntary unemployment.

3. The complete fulfilment of the nation's pledge to the trade unionists that they should be unconditionally reinstated in respect of the trade union conditions and workshop customs

abrogated in the public interest; or else that the Government should submit for their acceptance measures calculated to achieve the same ends.

4. The complete restoration of freedom of speech, publication, travel, residence, and choice of occupation, and the abolition of all compulsory military service.

5. The completion of political democracy by adult suffrage, equal rights of voting for both sexes, and the abolition of any Second Chamber presuming to limit or control the supremacy of the popularly elected House of Commons.

6. The immediate application to Ireland of the fullest possible measure of Home Rule.

7. Provision for the greatly increased efficiency of the Legislature by the devolution of English, Scottish, and Welsh business to separate local legislatures united in a Federal Parliament.

8. The retention by the State of the railways and canals, the expropriation of the shareholders on equitable terms, and the organisation under public control, or a national system of transport worked for exclusively public objects.

9. The retention by the State of the coal and iron mines, the expropriation of the present owners on equitable terms, and the organisation by the National Government and the local authorities of the supply of coal as a public service.

10. The provision and management by the Government itself, in conjunction with the local authorities, of the proposed gigantic super-power stations by which electricity can be provided at the lowest possible cost, without toll to the capitalist companies, for both industrial and domestic purposes.

11. The effective maintenance of the standard of life for the whole nation by the suitable amendment and extension of the Factories, Mines, Trade Boards, and similar Acts.

12. The revision of the rates, age for eligibility, and conditions of old-age pensions, so as to make the statutory pension an absolute right of every person of pensionable age.

13. The abolition of the Poor Law and the merging of its present services in those already rendered by the directly elected local authorities to the children, the sick and infirm (including maternity and infancy), the mentally defective, the aged, and the able-bodied unemployed, stimulated, aided, and controlled by an effective Ministry of Health, whilst suitable

measures for the prevention of unemployment, and the securing of situations for the unemployed are taken by a Ministry of Employment.

14. The extension of the powers of county, borough, district, and parish councils, alike in respect of the acquisition of land, the reform of the system of assessment and rating, the obtaining of additional grants-in-aid, and freedom to undertake all the services desired by their constituents, together with the immediate resumption of local elections with proportional representation.

15. The prompt carrying through of a comprehensive national measure of housing, the local authorities being everywhere required, with grants-in-aid sufficient to prevent any charge on the rates, to make good the whole of the existing shortage in well-planned, well-built, commodious, and healthy homes for the entire population.

16. The reorganisation of agriculture and rural life by the resumption by the State of its ownership of the land, and its use as State farms, small holdings, and allotments, or cooperative enterprises, in such a way as to secure the greatest possible production, not of game or of rent, but of the people's food, together with standard wages for all the workers employed, adequate security for the farmer's enterprise, healthy dwellings for all the country population, and the development of village life and civilisation.

17. A national system of education, free and effectively open to all persons, irrespective of their means, from the nursery school to the university; based on the principle of extending to persons of all ages, without distinction of class or wealth and without any taint of militarism, genuine opportunities for the most effective education on a broad and liberal basis, and the provision for teachers of all kinds and grades of salaries, pensions, training, and opportunities of advancement commensurate with the high social importance of their calling.

18. The nationalisation of life assurance, with equitable compensation to the shareholders and complete provision for all persons now employed, in order both to place beyond doubt the security of the existing policies and to supersede the present costly and objectionable system of industrial life assur-



ance by a universal provision of funeral benefit, free from the weekly house-to-house collection of the people's pence.

19. The protection of the public against the "money trust," now rapidly being formed through the banking amalgamations, by means of the development of the Post Office Savings Bank into a universal national banking system, carried on without capitalist control, and the nationalisation, with equitable compensation to the shareholders, of the banking companies to be absorbed.

20. The most strenuous resistance to any attempt to saddle the cost of the war and the National Debt upon the consumers by any system of taxation of food or commodities of popular consumption, or by Customs or Excise duties on anything but luxuries, or by any special taxation of cooperative societies or of wages. The Labour Party would have the nation pay its way by adjusting taxation strictly according to the ability to bear it. This requires the raising of the exemption limit, a much steeper graduation and increase of the super-tax, the taking of unearned increment by the taxation of land values, the doubling or trebling of the death duties, and the "conscription of wealth." This means the substitution for a large part of the existing income-tax of a carefully graduated capital tax, exempting possessions under £1,000 and taxing very lightly those under £5,000.

### *Other Resolutions*

This Conference is of opinion that in the new Parliament following the coming General Election the Labour Party should be free to promote its reconstruction policy in the most effective manner that the Parliamentary situation will permit. It meantime declares that a General Election held for the purpose of choosing a Parliament to carry on the business of the country after the war terminates the conditions under which the party entered the Coalition, and it determines that the party shall resume its independence and withdraw its members from the Government at the close of the present Parliament.

That in the official delegations from each of the belligerent countries which formulate the Peace Treaty the workers should have direct official representation;

That a World Labour Congress should be held at the same time and place as the Peace Conference that will formulate the Peace Treaty closing the war.

## APPENDIX VII

### INTERIM REPORT ON JOINT STANDING INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS

SUB-COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND  
EMPLOYED; RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

To the Right Honourable D. Lloyd George, M. P., Prime Minister.

SIR, We have the honour to submit the following Interim Report on Joint Standing Industrial Councils.

2. The terms of reference to the Sub-Committee are:—

“(1) To make and consider suggestions for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and workmen.

“(2) To recommend means for securing that industrial conditions affecting the relations between employers and workmen shall be systematically reviewed by those concerned, with a view to improving conditions in the future.”

3. After a general consideration of our duties in relation to the matters referred to us, we decided first to address ourselves to the problem of establishing permanently improved relations between employers and employed in the main industries of the country, in which there exist representative organisations on both sides. The present report accordingly deals more especially with these trades. We are proceeding with the consideration of the problems connected with the industries which are less well organised.

4. We appreciate that under the pressure of the war both employers and workpeople and their organisations are very much preoccupied, but, notwithstanding, we believe it to be of the highest importance that our proposals should be put before those concerned without delay, so that employers and employed may meet in the near future and discuss the problems before them.

5. The circumstances of the present time are admitted on all sides to offer a great opportunity for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed, while failure to utilise the opportunity may involve the nation in grave industrial difficulties at the end of the war.

It is generally allowed that the war almost enforced some reconstruction of industry, and in considering the subjects referred to us we have kept in view the need for securing in the development of reconstruction the largest possible measure of co-operation between employers and employed.

In the interests of the community it is vital that after the war the co-operation of all classes, established during the war, should continue, and more especially with regard to the relations between employers and employed. For securing improvement in the latter, it is essential that any proposals put forward should offer to workpeople the means of attaining improved conditions of employment and *a higher standard of comfort* generally, and involve the enlistment of their active and continuous co-operation in the promotion of industry.

To this end, the establishment for each industry of an organisation, representative of employers and workpeople, to have as its object the regular consideration of matters affecting the progress and well-being of the trade from the point of view of all those engaged in it, so far as this is consistent with the general interest of the community, appears to us necessary.

6. Many complicated problems have arisen during the war which have a bearing both on employers and workpeople, and may affect the relations between them. It is clear that industrial conditions will need careful handling if grave difficulties and strained relations are to be avoided after the war has ended. The precise nature of the problems to be faced naturally varies from industry to industry, and even from branch to branch within the same industry. Their treatment consequently will need an intimate knowledge of the facts and circumstances of each trade, and such knowledge is to be found only among those directly connected with the trade.

7. With a view to providing means for carrying out the policy outlined above, we recommend that His Majesty's Government should propose without delay to the various associations of employers and employed the formation of Joint Standing Industrial Councils in the several industries, where they do not already exist, composed of representatives of employers

and employed, regard being paid to the various sections of the industry and the various classes of labour engaged.

8. The appointment of a Chairman or Chairmen should, we think, be left to the Council who may decide that these should be—

(1) A Chairman for each side of the Council;

(2) A Chairman and Vice-Chairman selected from the members of the Council (one from each side of the Council);

(3) A Chairman chosen by the Council from independent persons outside the industry; or

(4) A Chairman nominated by such person or authority as the Council may determine or, failing agreement, by the Government.

9. The Council should meet at regular and frequent intervals.

10. The objects to which the consideration of the Councils should be directed should be appropriate matters affecting the several industries and particularly the establishment of a closer co-operation between employers and employed. Questions connected with demobilisation will call for early attention.

11. One of the chief factors in the problem, as it at first presents itself, consists of the guarantees given by the Government, with Parliamentary sanction, and the various undertakings entered into by employers, to restore the Trade Union rules and customs suspended during the war. While this does not mean that all the lessons learnt during the war should be ignored, it does mean that the definite co-operation and acquiescence by both employers and employed must be a condition of any setting aside of these guarantees or undertakings, and that, if new arrangements are to be reached, in themselves more satisfactory to all parties but not in strict accordance with the guarantees, they must be the joint work of employers and employed.

12. The matters to be considered by the Councils must inevitably differ widely from industry to industry, as different circumstances and conditions call for different treatment, but we are of opinion that the suggestions set forth below ought to be taken into account, subject to such modification in each case as may serve to adapt them to the needs of the various industries.

13. In the well-organised industries, one of the first questions to be considered should be the establishment of *local and works organisations* to supplement and make more effective the



work of the central bodies. It is not enough to secure co-operation at the centre between the national organisations; it is equally necessary to enlist the activity and support of employers and employed in the districts and in individual establishments. The National Industrial Council should not be regarded as complete in itself; what is needed is a triple organisation—in the workshops, the districts, and nationally. Moreover, it is essential that the organisation at each of these three stages should proceed on a common principle, and that the greatest measure of common action between them should be secured.

14. With this end in view, we are of opinion that the following proposals should be laid before the National Industrial Councils:—

(a) That District Councils, representative of the Trade Unions and of the Employers' Association in the industry, should be created, or developed out of the existing machinery for negotiation in the various trades.

(b) That Works Committees, representative of the management and of the workers employed, should be instituted in particular works to act in close co-operation with the district and national machinery.

As it is of the highest importance that the scheme making provision for these Committees should be such as to secure the support of the Trade Unions and Employers' Associations concerned, its design should be a matter for agreement between these organisations.

Just as regular meetings and continuity of co-operation are essential in the case of the National Industrial Councils, so they seem to be necessary in the case of the district and works organisations. The object is to secure co-operation by granting to workpeople a greater share in the consideration of matters affecting their industry, and this can only be achieved by keeping employers and workpeople in constant touch.

15. The respective functions of Works Committees, District Councils, and National Councils will no doubt require to be determined separately in accordance with the varying conditions of different industries. Care will need to be taken in each case to delimit accurately their respective functions, in order to avoid overlapping and resulting friction. For instance, where conditions of employment are determined by national agreements, the District Councils or Works Committees should not be allowed to contract out of conditions so laid down, nor,

where conditions are determined by local agreements, should such power be allowed to Works Committees.

16. Among the questions with which it is suggested that the National Councils should deal or allocate to District Councils or Works Committees the following may be selected for special mention:—

(i) The better utilisation of the practical knowledge and experience of the workpeople.

(ii) Means for securing to the workpeople a greater share in and responsibility for the determination and observance of the conditions under which their work is carried on.

(iii) The settlement of the general principles governing the conditions of employment, including the methods of fixing, paying, and readjusting wages, having regard to the need for securing to the workpeople a share in the increased prosperity of the industry.

(iv) The establishment of regular methods of negotiation for issues arising between employers and workpeople, with a view both to the prevention of differences, and to their better adjustment when they appear.

(v) Means of ensuring to the workpeople the greatest possible security of earnings and employment, without undue restriction upon change of occupation or employer.

(vi) Methods of fixing and adjusting earnings, piece-work prices, &c., and of dealing with the many difficulties which arise with regard to the method and amount of payment apart from the fixing of general standard rates, which are already covered by paragraph (iii).

(vii) Technical education and training.

(viii) Industrial research and the full utilisation of its results.

(ix) The provision of facilities for the full consideration and utilisation of inventions and improvement designed by workpeople, and for the adequate safeguarding of the rights of the designers of such improvements.

(x) Improvements of processes, machinery and organisation and appropriate questions relating to management and the examination of industrial experiments, with special reference to co-operation in carrying new ideas into effect and full consideration of the workpeople's point of view in relation to them.

(xi) Proposed legislation affecting the industry.

17. The methods by which the functions of the proposed Councils should be correlated to those of joint bodies in the different districts, and in the various works within the districts, must necessarily vary according to the trade. It may, therefore, be the best policy to leave it to the trades themselves to formulate schemes suitable to their special circumstances, it being understood that it is essential to secure in each industry the fullest measure of co-operation between employers and employed, both generally, through the National Councils, and specifically, through district Committees and workshop Committees.

18. It would seem advisable that the Government should put the proposals relating to National Industrial Councils before the employers' and workpeoples' associations and request them to adopt such measures as are needful for their establishment where they do not already exist. Suitable steps should also be taken, at the proper time, to put the matter before the general public.

19. In forwarding the proposals to the parties concerned, we think the Government should offer to be represented in an advisory capacity at the preliminary meetings of a Council, if the parties so desire. We are also of opinion that the Government should undertake to supply to the various Councils such information on industrial subjects as may be available and likely to prove of value.

20. It has been suggested that means must be devised to safeguard the interests of the community against possible action of an anti-social character on the part of the Councils. We have, however, here assumed that the Councils, in their work of promoting the interests of their own industries, will have regard for the National interest. If they fulfil their functions they will be the best builders of national prosperity. The State never parts with its inherent over-riding power, but such power may be least needed when least obtruded.

21. It appears to us that it may be desirable at some later stage for the State to give the sanction of law to agreements made by the Councils, but the initiative in this direction should come from the Councils themselves.

22. The plans sketched in the foregoing paragraphs are applicable in the form in which they are given only to industries in which there are responsible associations of employers and workpeople which can claim to be fairly representative. The case of the less well-organised trades or sections of a trade

necessarily needs further consideration. We hope to be in a position shortly to put forward recommendations that will prepare the way for the active utilisation in these trades of the same practical co-operation as is foreshadowed in the proposals made above for the more highly-organised trades.

23. It may be desirable to state here our considered opinion that *an essential condition* of securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed is that there should be adequate organisation on the part of both employers and workpeople. The proposals outlined for joint co-operation throughout the several industries depend for their ultimate success upon there being such organisation on both sides; and such organisation is necessary also to provide means whereby the arrangements and agreements made for the industry may be effectively carried out.

24. We have thought it well to refrain from making suggestions or offering opinions with regard to such matters as profit-sharing, co-partnership, or particular systems of wages, &c. It would be impracticable for us to make any useful general recommendations on such matters, having regard to the varying conditions in different trades. We are convinced, moreover, that a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed must be founded upon something other than a cash basis. What is wanted is that the workpeople should have a greater opportunity of participating in the discussion about and adjustment of those parts of industry by which they are most affected.

25. The schemes recommended in this Report are intended not merely for the treatment of industrial problems when they have become acute, but also, and more especially, *to prevent their becoming acute*. We believe that regular meetings to discuss industrial questions, apart from and *prior to* any differences with regard to them that may have begun to cause *friction*, will materially reduce the number of occasions on which, in the view of either employers or employed, it is necessary to contemplate recourse to a stoppage of work.

26. We venture to hope that representative men in each industry, with pride in their calling and care for its place as a contributor to the national well-being, will come together in the manner here suggested, and apply themselves to promoting industrial harmony and efficiency and removing the obstacles that have hitherto stood in the way.



J. H. WHITLEY, *Chairman*, F. S. BUTTON, GEO. J. CARTER, S. J. CHAPMAN, G. H. CLAUGHTON, J. R. CLYNES, J. A. HOBSON, A. SUSAN LAWRENCE, J. J. MALLON, THOS. R. RATCLIFFE-ELLIS, ROBT. SMILLIE, ALLAN M. SMITH, MONA WILSON.

H. J. WILSON, ARTHUR GREENWOOD, *Secretaries*.

8th March, 1917.

*The following questions were addressed by the Reconstruction Committee to the Sub-Committee on the Relations between Employers and Employed in order to make clear certain points which appeared to call for further elucidation. The answers given are subjoined.*

*Q. 1. In what classes of Industries does the Interim Report propose that Industrial Councils shall be established? What basis of classification has the Sub-Committee in view?*

*A. 1.* It has been suggested that, for the purpose of considering the establishment of Industrial Councils, or other bodies designed to assist in the improvement of relations between employers and employed, the various industries should be grouped into three classes—(a) industries in which organisation on the part of employers and employed is sufficiently developed to render the Councils representative; (b) industries in which either as regards employers and employed, or both, the degree of organisation, though considerable, is less marked than in (a) and is sufficient to be regarded as representative; and (c) industries in which organisation is so imperfect, either as regards employers or employed, or both, that no Associations can be said adequately to represent those engaged in the trade.

It will be clear that an analysis of industries will show a number which are on the border lines between these groups and special consideration will have to be given to such trades. So far as groups (a) and (c) are concerned, a fairly large number of trades can readily be assigned to them; group (b) is necessarily more indeterminate.

For trades in group (a) the Committee have proposed the establishment of Joint Standing Industrial Councils in the several trades. In dealing with the various industries it may be necessary to consider specially the case of parts of industries in group (a) where organisation is not fully developed.

*Q. 2. Is the machinery proposed intended to be in addition to or in substitution for existing machinery? Is it proposed that existing machinery should be superseded? By "existing machinery" is meant Conciliation Boards and all other organisations for joint conference and discussion between Employers and Employed.*

A. 2. In most organised trades there already exist joint bodies for particular purposes. It is not proposed that the Industrial Councils should necessarily disturb these existing bodies. A council would be free, if it chose and if the bodies concerned approved, to merge existing Committees, &c., in the Council or to link them with the Council as Sub-Committees.

Q. 3. *Is it understood that membership of the Councils is to be confined to representatives elected by Employers' Associations and Trade Unions? What is the view of the Sub-Committee regarding the entry of new organisations established after the Councils have been set up?*

A. 3. It is intended that the Councils should be composed only of representatives of Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, and that new organisations should be admitted only with the approval of the particular side of the Council of which the organisation would form a part.

Q. 4. (a)—*Is it intended that decisions reached by the Councils shall be binding upon the bodies comprising them? If so, is such binding effect to be conditional upon the consent of each Employers' Association or Trade Union affected?*

A. 4. (a) It is contemplated that agreements reached by Industrial Councils should (whilst not of course possessing the binding force of law) carry with them the same obligation of observance as exists in the case of other agreements between Employers' Associations and Trade Unions. A Council, being on its workmen's side based on the Trade Unions concerned in the industry, its powers or authority could only be such as the constituent Trade Unions freely agreed to.

Q. 4. (b) *In particular, is it intended that all pledges given either by the Government or employers for the restoration of Trade Union rules and practices after the war shall be redeemed without qualification unless the particular Trade Union concerned agrees to alteration; or, on the contrary, that the Industrial Council shall have power to decide such question by a majority vote of the workmen's representatives from all the Trade Unions in the industry?*

A. 4. (b) It is clearly intended that all pledges relating to the restoration of Trade Union rules shall be redeemed without qualification unless the particular Trade Union concerned agrees to alteration; and it is not intended that the Council shall have power to decide such questions by a majority vote of the workmen's representatives from all the Trade Unions in the industry.

## APPENDIX VIII

### SECOND REPORT ON JOINT STANDING INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS

COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED;  
MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION

To the Right Honourable D. Lloyd George, M. P., Prime Minister.

SIR, Following the proposals made in our first Report, we have now the honour to present further recommendations dealing with industries in which organisation on the part of employers and employed is less completely established than in the industries covered by the previous Report, and with industries in which such organisation is weak or non-existent.

2. Before commencing the examination of these industries the Committee came to the conclusion that it would materially assist their enquiries if they could have the direct advantage of the knowledge and experience of some representative employers who were connected with industries of the kind with which the Committee were about to deal; and it was arranged, with your approval, that Sir Maurice Levy, Mr. F. N. Hepworth, Mr. W. Hill, and Mr. D. R. H. Williams should be appointed to act with the Committee while these industries were under consideration. This arrangement made it possible to release from attendance at the earlier meetings of the Committee Sir Gilbert Claughton, Sir T. Ratcliffe-Ellis, Sir George J. Carter, and Mr. Allan Smith, whose time is greatly occupied in other public work and whose experience is more particularly related to the organised trades covered by our former Report.

3. It is difficult to classify industries according to the degree of organisation among employers and employed, but for convenience of consideration the industries of the country may be divided into three groups:—

*Group A.*—Consisting of industries in which organisation on the part of employers and employed is sufficiently developed to render their respective associations representative of the great majority of those engaged in the industry. These are the industries which we had in mind in our first Interim Report.

*Group B.*—Comprising those industries in which, either as regards employers and employed, or both, the degree of organisation, though considerable, is less marked than in Group A.

*Group C.*—Consisting of industries in which organisation is so imperfect, either as regards employers or employed, or both, that no associations can be said adequately to represent those engaged in the industry.

The present Report is concerned with Groups B. and C.

4. So far as Groups A. and C. are concerned, a number of industries can be definitely assigned to them. Group B., however, is necessarily more indeterminate. Some of the industries in this group approach closely to industries in Group A, while others verge upon Group C. Further, most industries, in whatever class they may fall, possess a "tail," consisting of badly organised areas, or sections of the industry. These facts we have borne in mind in formulating our further proposals.

5. So far as industries in Group B. are concerned, we are of opinion that the proposals of our First Report should, in their main lines, be applied to those which, on examination by the Ministry of Labour in consultation with the Associations concerned, are found to be relatively well organised. We suggest, however, that where in these industries a National Industrial Council is formed there should be appointed one or at most two official representatives to assist in the initiation of the Council, and continue after its establishment to act in an advisory capacity and serve as a link with the Government. We do not contemplate that a representative so appointed should be a member of the National Industrial Council, in the sense that he should have power, by a vote, to influence the decisions of the Council, but that he should attend its meetings and assist in any way which may be found acceptable to it. By so doing he would acquire a continuous knowledge of the conditions of the industry of which the Government could avail itself, and so avoid many mistakes that under present conditions are inevitable.



The question of the retention of the official representatives should be considered by the Councils in the light of experience gained when an adequate time has elapsed. We anticipate that in many cases their continued assistance will be found of value even after an industry has attained a high degree of organisation, but in no case should they remain except at the express wish of the Councils concerned.

6. It may be that in some Group B. industries in which a National Industrial Council is formed certain areas are well suited to the establishment of District Councils, while in other areas the organisation of employers or employed, or both, is too weak to be deemed representative. There appears to be no good reason why in the former areas there should not be District Industrial Councils, acting in conjunction with the National Industrial Councils, in accordance with the principles formulated in the Committee's earlier report on the well-organised trades.

7. An examination of some of the industries coming within Group B. may show that there are some which, owing to the peculiarities of the trades and their geographical distribution, cannot at present be brought readily within the scope of the proposals for a National Industrial Council, though they may be quite well organised in two or more separate districts. In such a case we think there might well be formed one or more District Industrial Councils. We anticipate that in course of time the influence of the District Councils would be such that the industry would become suitable for the establishment of a National Industrial Council.

8. In the case of industries in Group B. (as in the industries covered by our first Report), we consider that the members of the National Councils and of the District Councils should be representatives of the Employers' Associations and Trade Unions concerned. In the formation of the Councils, regard should be paid to the various sections of the industry and the various classes of labour engaged, and the representatives should include representatives of women's organisations. In view of the extent to which women are employed in these industries, we think the Trade Unions, when selecting their representatives for the Councils, should include a number of women among those who are appointed to be members.

9. It does not appear to us necessary or desirable to suggest any fixed standard of organisation which should exist in

any industry before a National Industrial Council should be established. The case of each industry will need to be considered separately, regard being paid to its particular circumstances and characteristics.

In the discussion of this matter, we have considered whether it would be feasible to indicate a percentage of organisation which should be reached before a Council is formed, but, in view of the great diversity of circumstances in these industries and of the differing degrees to which the several sections of some of them are organised, we have come to the conclusion that it is more desirable to leave the matter to the decision of the Ministry of Labour and the organisations concerned. Whatever theoretical standard may be contemplated, we think its application should not be restrictive in either direction.

10. The level of organisation in industries in Group C, is such as to make the scheme we have proposed for National or District Industrial Councils inapplicable. To these industries the machinery of the Trade Boards Act might well be applied, pending the development of such degree of organisation as would render feasible the establishment of a National Council or District Councils.

11. The Trade Boards Act was originally intended to secure the establishment of a minimum standard of wages in certain unorganised industries, but we consider that the Trade Boards should be regarded also as a means of supplying a regular machinery for negotiation and decision on certain groups of questions dealt with in other circumstances by collective bargaining between employers' organisations and trade unions.

In order that the Trade Boards Act may be of greater utility in connection with unorganised and badly organised industries or sections of industries, we consider that certain modifications are needed to enlarge the functions of the Trade Boards. We suggest that they should be empowered to deal not only with minimum rates of wages but with hours of labour and questions cognate to wages and hours. We are of opinion also that the functions of the Trade Boards should be extended so as to enable them to initiate and conduct enquiries on all matters affecting the industry or the section of the industry concerned.

12. If these proposals were adopted, there would be set up, in a number of industries or sections of industries, Trade Boards (consisting of representatives of employers and employed, together with "appointed members") who would, within

the scope of their functions, establish minimum standard rates and conditions applicable to the industry or section of the industry which they represented, and consider systematically matters affecting the well-being of the industry.

13. Where an industry in Group C. becomes sufficiently organised to admit of the institution of National and District Councils, we consider that these bodies should be set up on the lines already indicated. Where it appears to a Trade Board that an Industrial Council should be appointed in the industry concerned, they should have power (a) to make application to the Minister of Labour asking him to approach the organisations of employers and employed, and (b) to suggest a scheme by which the representation of the workers' and employers' sides of the Trade Board could be secured.

14. Whether in industries in Group C. the establishment of Works Committees is to be recommended is a question which calls for very careful examination, and we have made the general question of Works Committees the subject of a separate Report.

15. We have already pointed out that most of the industries in Groups A. and B. have sections or areas in which the degree of organisation among the employers and employed falls much below what is normal in the rest of the industry; and it appears to us desirable that the general body of employers and employed in any industry should have some means whereby they may bring the whole of the trade up to the standard of minimum conditions which have been agreed upon by a substantial majority of the industry. We therefore recommend that, on the application of a National Industrial Council sufficiently representative of an industry, the Minister of Labour should be empowered, if satisfied that the case is a suitable one, to make an Order either instituting for a section of the industry a Trade Board on which the National Industrial Council should be represented, or constituting the Industrial Council a Trade Board under the provisions of the Trade Boards Act. These proposals are not intended to limit, but to be in addition to, the powers at present held by the Ministry of Labour with regard to the establishment of Trade Boards in trades and industries where they are considered by the Ministry to be necessary.

16. We have already indicated (paragraph 9) that the circumstances and characteristics of each of the several industries

will need to be considered before it can be decided definitely how far any of our proposals can be applied in particular instances, and we have refrained from attempting to suggest any exact degree of organisation which would be requisite before a particular proposal could be applied. We think, however, that the suggestion we have made in the preceding paragraph to confer upon a National Industrial Council the powers of a Trade Board should be adopted only in those cases in which the Minister of Labour is satisfied that the Council represents a substantial majority of the industry concerned.

17. We are of opinion that most of the chief industries of the country could be brought under one or other of the schemes contained in this and the preceding Report. There would then be broadly two classes of industries in the country—industries with Industrial Councils and industries with Trade Boards.

18. In the former group the National Industrial Councils would be constituted either in the manner we have indicated in our first Report, carrying with them District Councils and Works Committees, or on the lines suggested in the present Report, *i. e.*, each Council coming within the scope of this Report having associated with it one, or two, official representatives to act in an advisory capacity and as a link with the Government, in addition to the representatives of the employers and employed.

19. It should be noted that in the case of industries in which there is a National Industrial Council, Trade Boards might, in some instances, be associated with the Council in order to determine wages and hours, &c. in certain sections or areas. It is possible that in some allied trades, really forming part of the same industry, both sets of proposals might, in the first instance, be in operation side by side, one trade having its Industrial Council and the other its Trade Board. Where these circumstances obtain, we anticipate that the Trade Board would be a stepping stone to the full Industrial Council status.

20. It may be useful to present a brief outline of the proposals which we have so far put forward:—

- (a) In the more highly organised industries (Group A.) we propose a triple organisation of national, district, and workshop bodies, as outlined in our first Report.
- (b) In industries where there are representative associations of employers and employed, which, however, do not possess the authority of those in Group A. industries,



we propose that the triple organisation should be modified by attaching to each National Industrial Council one or at most two representatives of the Ministry of Labour to act in an advisory capacity.

(c) In industries in both Groups A. and B., we propose that unorganised areas or branches of an industry should be provided, on the application of the National Industrial Council and with the approval of the Ministry of Labour, with Trade Boards for such areas or branches, the Trade Boards being linked with the Industrial Council.

(d) In industries having no adequate organisation of employers or employed, we recommend that Trade Boards should be continued or established, and that these should, with the approval of the Ministry of Labour, be enabled to formulate a scheme for an Industrial Council, which might include in an advisory capacity the "appointed members" of the Trade Board.

21. It will be observed that the policy we recommend is based upon organisation on the part of both employers and employed. Where this is adequate, as in Group A. industries, there is no need of external assistance. In Group B. industries, we think that the organisations concerned would be glad to have the services of an official representative who would act as adviser and as a link with the Government. In unorganised sections of both groups of industries we believe that a larger measure of Government assistance will be both desirable and acceptable, and we have therefore suggested the adoption of the machinery of the Trade Boards Act in this connection. In Group C. industries we think that organisation will be encouraged by the use of the powers under the Trade Boards Act, and where National Industrial Councils are set up we recommend that the "appointed members" of the Trade Board should act on the Councils in an advisory capacity. Briefly, our proposals are that the extent of State assistance should vary inversely with the degree of organisation in industries.

22. We do not, however, regard Government assistance as an alternative to the organisation of employers and employed. On the contrary, we regard it as a means of furthering the growth and development of such organisation.

23. We think it advisable in this connection to repeat the following paragraph from our former Report:—

"It may be desirable to state here our considered opinion that an essential condition of securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and employed is that there should be adequate organisation on the part of both employers and workpeople. The proposals outlined for joint co-operation throughout the several industries depend for their ultimate success upon there being such organisation on both sides; and such organisation is necessary also to provide means whereby the arrangements and agreements made for the industry may be effectively carried out."

24. In considering the scope of the matters referred to us we have formed the opinion that the expression "employers and workmen" in our reference covers State and Municipal authorities and persons employed by them. Accordingly we recommend that such authorities and their workpeople should take into consideration the proposals made in this and in our first Report, with a view to determining how far such proposals can suitably be adopted in their case.

We understand that the Ministry of Labour has up to the present circulated our first Report only to employers' and workpeople's associations in the ordinary private industries. We think, however, that both it and the present Report should also be brought to the notice of State Departments and Municipal Authorities employing Labour.

25. The proposals we have set forth above do not require legislation except on three points, namely, to provide—

(1) That the Trade Boards shall have power, in addition to determining minimum rates of wages, to deal with hours of labour and questions cognate to wages and hours.

(2) That the Trade Boards shall have power to initiate enquiries, and make proposals to the Government Departments concerned, on matters affecting the industrial conditions of the trade, as well as on questions of general interest to the industries concerned respectively.

(3) That when an Industrial Council sufficiently representative of an industry makes application, the Minister of Labour shall have power, if satisfied that the case is a suitable one, to make an Order instituting for a section of the industry a Trade Board on which the Industrial Council shall be represented, or constituting the Council a Trade Board under the Trade Boards Acts.

26. The proposals which we have made must necessarily be

adapted to meet the varying needs and circumstances of different industries, and it is not anticipated that there will be uniformity in practice. Our recommendations are intended merely to set forth the main lines of development which we believe to be essential to ensure better relations between employers and employed. Their application to the several industries we can safely leave to those intimately concerned, with the conviction that the flexibility and adaptability of industrial organisation which have been so large a factor in enabling industry to stand the enormous strain of the war will not fail the country when peace returns.

27. Other problems affecting the relations between employers and employed are engaging our attention, but we believe that, whatever further steps may be necessary to accomplish the object we have in view, the lines of development suggested in the present Report and the one which preceded it are fundamental. We believe that in each industry there is a sufficiently large body of opinion willing to adopt the proposals we have made as a means of establishing a new relation in industry.

J. H. WHITLEY, *Chairman*, F. S. BUTTON, S. J. CHAPMAN, G. H. CLAUGHTON, J. R. CLYNES, F. N. HEPWORTH, WILFRID HILL, J. A. HOBSON, A. SUSAN LAWRENCE, MAURICE LEVY, J. J. MALLON, THOS. R. RATCLIFFE-ELLIS, ALLAN M. SMITH, D. R. H. WILLIAMS, MONA WILSON.<sup>1</sup>

H. J. WILSON, A. GREENWOOD, *Secretaries*.

18th October, 1917.

<sup>1</sup> Sir G. J. Carter and Mr. Smillie were unable to attend any of the meetings at which this Report was considered and they therefore do not sign it.

## APPENDIX IX

### SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT ON WORKS COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED;  
MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION

To the Right Honourable D. Lloyd George, M. P., Prime Minister.

SIR, In our first and second Reports we have referred to the establishment of Works Committees,<sup>1</sup> representative of the management and of the workpeople, and appointed from within the works, as an essential part of the scheme of organisation suggested to secure improved relations between employers and employed. The purpose of the present Report is to deal more fully with the proposal to institute such Committees.

2. Better relations between employers and their workpeople can best be arrived at by granting to the latter a greater share in the consideration of matters with which they are concerned. In every industry there are certain questions, such as rates of wages and hours of work, which should be settled by District or National agreement, and with any matter so settled no Works Committee should be allowed to interfere; but there are also many questions closely affecting daily life and comfort in, and the success of, the business, and affecting in no small degree efficiency of working, which are peculiar to the individual workshop or factory. The purpose of a Works Committee is to establish and maintain a system of co-operation in all these workshop matters.

3. We have throughout our recommendations proceeded upon the assumption that the greatest success is likely to be

<sup>1</sup> In the use of the term "Works Committees" in this Report it is not intended to use the word "works" in a technical sense; in such an industry as the Coal Trade, for example, the term "Pit Committees" would probably be the term used in adopting the scheme.



achieved by leaving to the representative bodies of employers and employed in each industry the maximum degree of freedom to settle for themselves the precise form of Council or Committee which should be adopted, having regard in each case to the particular circumstances of the trade; and, in accordance with this principle, we refrain from indicating any definite form of constitution for the Works Committees. Our proposals as a whole assume the existence of organisations of both employers and employed and a frank and full recognition of such organisations. Works Committees established otherwise than in accordance with these principles could not be regarded as a part of the scheme we have recommended, and might indeed be a hindrance to the development of the new relations in industry to which we look forward. We think the aim should be the complete and coherent organisation of the trade on both sides, and Works Committees will be of value in so far as they contribute to such a result.

4. We are of opinion that the complete success of Works Committees necessarily depends largely upon the degree and efficiency of organisation in the trade, and upon the extent to which the Committees can be linked up, through organisations that we have in mind, with the remainder of the scheme which we are proposing, viz., the District and National Councils. We think it important to state that the success of the Works Committees would be very seriously interfered with if the idea existed that such Committees were used, or likely to be used, by employers in opposition to Trade Unionism. It is strongly felt that the setting up of Works Committees without the co-operation of the Trade Unions and the Employers' Associations in the trade or branch of trade concerned would stand in the way of the improved industrial relationships which in these Reports we are endeavouring to further.

5. In an industry where the workpeople are unorganised, or only very partially organised, there is a danger that Works Committees may be used, or thought to be used, in opposition to Trade Unionism. It is important that such fears should be guarded against in the initiation of any scheme. We look upon successful Works Committees as the broad base of the Industrial Structure which we have recommended, and as the means of enlisting the interest of the workers in the success both of the industry to which they are attached and of the workshop or factory where so much of their life is spent. These Com-

mittees should not, in constitution or methods of working, discourage Trade organisations.

6. Works Committees, in our opinion, should have regular meetings at fixed times, and, as a general rule, not less frequently than once a fortnight. They should always keep in the forefront the idea of constructive co-operation in the improvement of the industry to which they belong. Suggestions of all kinds tending to improvement should be frankly welcomed and freely discussed. Practical proposals should be examined from all points of view. There is an undeveloped asset of constructive ability—valuable alike to the industry and to the State—awaiting the means of realisation; problems, old and new, will find their solution in a frank partnership of knowledge, experience and goodwill. Works Committees would fail in their main purpose if they existed only to smooth over grievances.

7. We recognise that, from time to time, matters will arise which the management or the workmen consider to be questions they cannot discuss in these joint meetings. When this occurs, we anticipate that nothing but good will come from the friendly statement of the reasons why the reservation is made.

8. We regard the successful development and utilisation of Works Committees in any business on the basis recommended in this Report as of equal importance with its commercial and scientific efficiency; and we think that in every case one of the partners or directors, or some other responsible representative of the management, would be well advised to devote a substantial part of his time and thought to the good working and development of such a committee.

9. There has been some experience, both before the war and during the war, of the benefits of Works Committees, and we think it should be recommended most strongly to employers and employed that, in connection with the scheme for the establishment of National and District Industrial Councils, they should examine this experience with a view to the institution of Works Committees on proper lines, in works where the conditions render their formation practicable. We have recommended that the Ministry of Labour should prepare a summary of the experience available with reference to Works Committees, both before and during the war, including information as to any rules or reports relating to such Committees, and should issue a memorandum thereon for the guidance of

employers and workpeople generally, and we understand that such a memorandum is now in course of preparation.<sup>1</sup>

10. In order to ensure uniform and common principles of action, it is essential that where National and District Industrial Councils exist the Works Committees should be in close touch with them, and the scheme for linking up Works Committees with the Councils should be considered and determined by the National Councils.

11. We have considered it better not to attempt to indicate any specific form of Works Committees. Industrial establishments show such infinite variation in size, number of persons employed, multiplicity of departments, and other conditions, that the particular form of Works Committees must necessarily be adapted to the circumstances of each case. It would, therefore, be impossible to formulate any satisfactory scheme which does not provide a large measure of elasticity.

We are confident that the nature of the particular organisation necessary for the various cases will be settled without difficulty by the exercise of goodwill on both sides.

J. H. WHITLEY, *Chairman*, F. S. BUTTON, S. J. CHAPMAN, G. H. CLAUGHTON, J. R. CLYNES, F. N. HEPWORTH, WILFRID HILL, J. A. HOBSON, A. SUSAN LAWRENCE, MAURICE LEVY, J. J. MALLON, THOS. R. RATCLIFFE-ELLIS, ALLAN M. SMITH, D. R. H. WILLIAMS, MONA WILSON.<sup>2</sup>

H. J. WILSON, A. GREENWOOD, *Secretaries*.

18th October, 1917.

<sup>1</sup> This Memorandum is now completed and will be published by the Ministry of Labour.

<sup>2</sup> Sir G. J. Carter and Mr. Smillie were unable to attend any of the meetings at which this Report was considered and they therefore do not sign it. Sir G. J. Carter has intimated that in his view, in accordance with the principles indicated in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of the Report, it is important that Works Committees should not deal with matters which ought to be directly dealt with by the firms concerned or their respective Associations in conjunction with the recognised representatives of the Trade Unions whose members are affected.

## APPENDIX X

### INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS AND TRADE BOARDS

MEMORANDUM BY THE MINISTER OF RECONSTRUCTION AND THE  
MINISTER OF LABOUR

1. THE proposals contained in the First Report on Joint Standing Industrial Councils (Cd. 8606) of the Committee on Relations between Employers and Employed have been adopted by the Government. The steps which have been taken to establish Industrial Councils have enabled the Government to consider the proposals of the Second Report on Joint Standing Industrial Councils (Cd. 9002) in the light of experience. This Report, which deals with industries other than those which are highly organised, follows naturally upon the First Report of the Committee, and develops the line of policy therein proposed. It has not been found possible from the administrative point of view to adopt the whole of the recommendations contained in the Second Report, but such modifications as it seems desirable to make do not affect the principles underlying the Committee's proposal for the establishment of Joint Industrial Councils. They are designed to take advantage of the administrative experience of the Ministry of Labour with regard to both Industrial Councils and Trade Boards. In view of the growing interest which is being taken in the establishment of Industrial Councils and of the proposed extension of Trade Boards, it appears desirable to set forth the modifications which the Government regard as necessary in putting into operation the recommendations of the Second Report, and also to make clear the relations between Trade Boards and Industrial Councils.

2. The First Report on Joint Standing Industrial Councils referred only to the well-organised industries. The Second Report deals with the less organised and unorganised trades, and suggests the classification of the industries of the country into three groups:—



"Group A.—Consisting of industries in which organisation on the part of employers and employed is sufficiently developed to render their respective associations representative of the great majority of those engaged in the industry. These are the industries which we had in mind in our first Interim Report.

"Group B.—Comprising those industries in which, either as regards employers and employed, or both, the degree of organisation, though considerable, is less marked than in Group A.

"Group C.—Consisting of industries in which organisation is so imperfect, either as regards employers or employed, or both, that no associations can be said adequately to represent those engaged in the industry."

The proposals of the Committee on Relations between Employers and Employed are summarised in paragraph 20 of their Second Report as follows:—

"(a) In the more highly organised industries (Group A.) we proposed a triple organisation of national, district, and work-shop bodies, as outlined in our First Report.

"(b) In industries where there are representative associations of employers and employed, which, however, do not possess the authority of those in Group A. industries, we propose that the triple organisation should be modified, by attaching to each National Industrial Council one, or at most two representatives of the Ministry of Labour to act in an advisory capacity.

"(c) In industries in both Groups A. and B., we propose that unorganised areas or branches of an industry should be provided, on the application of the National Industrial Council, and with the approval of the Ministry of Labour, with Trade Boards for such areas or branches, the Trade Boards being linked with the Industrial Council.

"(d) In industries having no adequate organisation of employers or employed, we recommend that Trade Boards should be continued or established, and that these should, with the approval of the Ministry of Labour, be enabled to formulate a scheme for an Industrial Council, which might include, in an advisory capacity, the 'appointed members' of the Trade Board."

It may be convenient to set out briefly the modifications of the above proposals, which it has been found necessary to make.

(1) As regards (b) it has been decided to recognise one type of Industrial Council only, and not to attach official repre-

sentatives to the Council, except on the application of the Industrial Council itself.

(2) As regards (c) and (d) the relations between Trade Boards and Industrial Councils raise a number of serious administrative difficulties due to the wide differences in the purpose and structure of the two types of bodies. It is not regarded as advisable that a Trade Board should formulate a scheme for an Industrial Council, nor is it probable that Trade Boards for unorganised areas will be set up in conjunction with a Joint Industrial Council.

3. It is necessary at the outset to emphasise the fundamental differences between Industrial Councils and Trade Boards. A Joint Industrial Council is voluntary in its character and can only be brought into existence with the agreement of the organisations of employers and workpeople in the particular industry, and the Council itself is composed exclusively of persons nominated by the Employers' Associations and Trade Unions concerned. The Industrial Council is, moreover, within very wide limits, able to determine its own functions, machinery and methods of working. Its functions in almost all cases will probably cover a wide range and will be concerned with many matters other than wages. Its machinery and methods will be based upon past experience of the industry and the existing organisation of both employers and employed. Industrial Councils will, therefore, vary in structure and functions as can be seen from the provisional constitutions already submitted to the Ministry of Labour. Financially they will be self-supporting, and will receive no monetary aid from the Government. The Government proposes to recognise the Industrial Council in an industry as the representative organisation to which it can refer. This was made clear in the Minister of Labour's circular letter of October 20th, 1917, in which it is said that "the Government desire it to be understood that the Councils will be recognised as the official standing consultative committees to the Government on all future questions affecting the industries which they represent, and that they will be the normal channel through which the opinion and experience of an industry will be sought on all questions in which the industry is concerned."

A Trade Board, on the other hand, is a statutory body established by the Minister of Labour and constituted in accordance with Regulations made by him in pursuance of the Trade

Boards Act; and its expenses, in so far as authorised by the Minister of Labour and sanctioned by the Treasury, are defrayed out of public money. The Regulations may provide for the election of the representatives of employers and workers or for their nomination by the Minister of Labour, but in either case provision must be made for the representation of home-workers in trades in which a considerable proportion of home-workers are engaged. On account of the comparative lack of organisation in the trades to which the Act at present applies, the method of nomination by the Minister has proved in practice to be preferable to that of election, and in nearly all cases the representative members of Trade Boards are now nominated by the Minister. The Employers' Associations and Trade Unions in the several trades are invited to submit the names of candidates for the Minister's consideration, and full weight is attached to their recommendation, but where the trade organisations do not fully represent all sections of the trade, it is necessary to look outside them to find representatives of the different processes and districts affected.

A further distinction between Trade Boards and Industrial Councils is, that while Industrial Councils are composed entirely of representatives of the Employers' Associations and Trade Unions in the industry, every Trade Board includes, in addition to the representative members, a small number (usually three) of "appointed members," one of whom is appointed by the Minister to act as Chairman and one as Deputy Chairman of the Board. The appointed members are unconnected with the trade and are appointed by the Minister as impartial persons. The primary function of a Trade Board is the determination of minimum rates of wages, and when the minimum rates of wages fixed by a Trade Board have been confirmed by the Minister of Labour, they are enforceable by criminal proceedings, and officers are appointed to secure their observance. The minimum rates thus become part of the law of the land, and are enforced in the same manner as, for example, the provisions of the Factory Acts. The purpose, structure, and functions of Industrial Councils and Trade Boards are therefore fundamentally different. Their respective areas of operation are also determined by different considerations. An Industrial Council will exercise direct influence only over the organisations represented upon it. It will comprise those employers' associations with common interests and common problems; similarly its trade

union side will be composed of representatives of organisations whose interests are directly interdependent. An Industrial Council therefore is representative of organisations whose objects and interests, whilst not identical, are sufficiently interlocked to render common action desirable. The various organisations represent the interests of employers and workers engaged in the production of a particular commodity or service (or an allied group of commodities or services).

A Trade Board, on the other hand, is not based on existing organisations of employers and employed, but covers the whole of the trade for which it is established. As the minimum rates are enforceable by law, it is necessary that the boundaries of the trade should be precisely defined; this is done, within the limits prescribed by statute, by the Regulations made by the Minister of Labour. Natural divisions of industry are, of course, followed as far as possible, but in many cases the line of demarcation must necessarily be somewhat arbitrary. In the case of Industrial Councils difficult demarcation problems also arise, but the considerations involved are somewhat different, as the object is to determine whether the interests represented by given organisations are sufficiently allied to justify the co-operation of these organisations in one Industrial Council.

4. The reports received from those who are engaged in assisting the formation of Joint Industrial Councils show that certain paragraphs in the Second Report of the Committee on Relations between Employers and Employed have caused some confusion as to the character and scope of Joint Industrial Councils and Trade Boards respectively. It is essential to the future development of Joint Industrial Councils that their distinctive aim and character should be maintained. It is necessary therefore to keep clearly in mind the respective functions of the Joint Industrial Council and the Trade Board, in considering the recommendations contained in the following paragraphs of the Second Report:—

(a) Paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, dealing with the division of Joint Industrial Councils into those that cover Group A. industries, and those that cover Group B. industries.

(b) Paragraph 7, dealing with district Industrial Councils in industries where no National Council exists.

(c) Paragraphs 10, 13, 15 and 16, dealing with Trade Boards in relation to Joint Industrial Councils.



(d) Paragraphs 11 and 12, dealing with Trade Boards in industries which are not suitably organised for the establishment of a Joint Industrial Council.

5. *Distinction drawn between Joint Industrial Councils in Group A. Industries and Group B. Industries.*—In paragraph 9 of the Second Report it is implied that the Ministry of Labour would determine whether the standard of organisation in any given industry has reached such a stage as to justify the official recognition of a Joint Industrial Council in that industry. It is clear, however, that it would be impossible for the Ministry to discover any satisfactory basis for distinguishing between an industry which falls into Group A., and one which falls into Group B. It is admitted in paragraph 9 of the Second Report, that no arbitrary standard of organisation could be adopted, and it would be both invidious and impracticable for the Ministry of Labour, upon whom the responsibility would fall, to draw a distinction between A. and B. Industries. The only clear distinction is between industries which are sufficiently organised to justify the formation of a Joint Industrial Council, and those which are not sufficiently organised. Individual cases must be judged on their merits after a consideration of the scope and effectiveness of the organisation, the complexity of the industry and the wishes of those concerned.

The experience already gained in connection with Joint Industrial Councils indicates that it would be inadvisable in the case of industries in Group B. to adopt the proposal that "there should be appointed one or at most two official representatives to assist in the initiation of the Council and continue after its establishment to act in an advisory capacity and serve as a link with the Government." It is fundamental to the idea of a Joint Industrial Council that it is a voluntary body set up by the industry itself, acting as an independent body and entirely free from all State control. Whilst the Minister of Labour would be willing to give every assistance to Industrial Councils, he would prefer that any suggestion of this kind should come from the industry, rather than from the Ministry.

The main idea of the Joint Industrial Council as a Joint Body representative of an industry and independent of State control has now become familiar, and the introduction of a second type of Joint Industrial Council for B. industries would be likely to cause confusion and possibly to prejudice the future growth of Joint Industrial Councils.

In view of these circumstances, therefore, it has been decided to adopt a single type of Industrial Council.

6. *District Industrial Councils.*—Paragraph 7 of the Second Report suggests that in certain industries in which a National Industrial Council is not likely to be formed, in the immediate future, it might none the less be possible to form one or more “District” Industrial Councils.

In certain cases the formation of joint bodies covering a limited area is probable. It would, however, avoid confusion if the term “District” were not part of the title of such Councils, and if the use of it were confined to District Councils in an industry where a National Council exists. Independent local Councils might well have a territorial designation instead.

7. *Trade Boards in Relation to Joint Industrial Councils.*—The distinction between Trade Boards and Joint Industrial Councils has been set forth in paragraph 3 above. The question whether an Industrial Council should be formed for a given industry depends on the degree of organisation achieved by the employers and workers in the industry, whereas the question whether a Trade Board should be established depends primarily on the rates of wages prevailing in the industry or in any part of the industry. This distinction makes it clear that the question whether a Trade Board should or should not be set up by the Minister of Labour for a given industry, must be decided apart from the question whether a Joint Industrial Council should or should not be recognised in that industry by the Minister of Labour.

It follows from this that it is possible that both a Joint Industrial Council and a Trade Board may be necessary within the same industry.

In highly organised industries, the rates of wages prevailing will not, as a rule, be so low as to necessitate the establishment of a Trade Board. In some cases, however, a well-defined section of an otherwise well-organised industry or group of industries may be unorganised and ill-paid; in such a case it would clearly be desirable for a Trade Board to be established for the ill-paid section, while there should at the same time be an Industrial Council for the remaining sections, or even for the whole, of the industry or industrial group.

In the case of other industries sufficiently organised to justify the establishment of an Industrial Council, the organisations represented on the Council may nevertheless not be compre-

hensive enough to regulate wages effectively throughout the industry. In such cases a Trade Board for the whole industry may possibly be needed.

Where a Trade Board covers either the whole or part of an industry covered by a Joint Industrial Council, the relations between them may, in order to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding, be defined as follows:—

(1) Where Government Departments wish to consult the industry, the Joint Industrial Council, and not the Trade Board, will be recognised as the body to be consulted.

(2) In order to make use of the experience of the Trade Board, the constitution of the Industrial Council should be so drawn as to make full provision for consultation between the Council and the Trade Board on matters referred to the former by a Government Department, and to allow of the representation of the Trade Board on any Sub-Committee of the Council dealing with questions with which the Trade Board is concerned.

(3) The Joint Industrial Council clearly cannot under any circumstances over-ride the statutory powers conferred upon the Trade Board, and if the Government at any future time adopted the suggestion contained in Section 21 of the First Report that the sanction of law should be given on the application of an Industrial Council to agreements made by the Council, such agreements could not be made binding on any part of a trade governed by a Trade Board, so far as the statutory powers of the Trade Board are concerned.

The Minister of Labour will not ordinarily set up a Trade Board to deal with an industry or branch of an industry, in which the majority of employers and workpeople are covered by wage agreements, but in which a minority, possibly in certain areas, are outside the agreement. It would appear that the proposal in Section 21 of the First Report was specially designed to meet such cases. Experience has shown that there are great difficulties in the way of establishing a Trade Board for one area only in which an industry is carried on, without covering the whole of a Trade, though the Trade Boards Act allows of this procedure.

8. *Trade Boards in industries which are not sufficiently organised for the establishment of a Joint Industrial Council.*—Section 3 of the Trade Boards Act, 1909, provides that “a Trade Board for any trade shall consider, as occasion requires,

any matter referred to them by a Secretary of State, the Board of Trade, or any other Government Department, with reference to the industrial conditions of the trade, and shall make a report upon the matter to the department by whom the question has been referred."

In the case of an industry in which a Trade Board has been established, but an Industrial Council has not been formed, the Trade Board is the only body that can claim to be representative of the industry as a whole.

It is already under a statutory obligation to consider questions referred to it by a Government Department; and where there is a Trade Board but no Industrial Council in an industry it will be suggested to Government Departments that they should consult the Trade Board as occasion requires in the same manner as they would consult Industrial Councils.

On the other hand, for the reasons which have been fully set out above, Industrial Councils must be kept distinct from Trade Boards, and the latter, owing to their constitution, cannot be converted into the former. If an industry in which a Trade Board is established becomes sufficiently organised for the formation of an Industrial Council, the Council would have to be formed on quite different lines from the Trade Board, and the initiative should come, not from the Trade Board, which is a body mainly nominated by the Minister of Labour, but from the organisations in the industry. Hence it would not be desirable that Trade Boards should undertake the formation of schemes for Industrial Councils.

MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION.



## APPENDIX XI

### NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE POTTERY INDUSTRY

#### OBJECTS

THE advancement of the Pottery Industry and of all connected with it by the association in its government of all engaged in the industry.

It will be open to the Council to take any action that falls within the scope of its general object. Its chief work will, however, fall under the following heads:—

(a) The consideration of means whereby all Manufacturers and Operatives shall be brought within their respective associations.

(b) Regular consideration of wages, piecework prices, and conditions with a view to establishing and maintaining equitable conditions throughout the industry.

(c) To assist the respective Associations in the maintenance of such selling prices as will afford a reasonable remuneration to both employers and employed.

(d) The consideration and settlement of all disputes between different parties in the industry which it may not have been possible to settle by the existing machinery, and the establishment of machinery for dealing with disputes where adequate machinery does not exist.

(e) The regularisation of production and employment as a means of insuring to the workpeople the greatest possible security of earnings.

(f) Improvement in conditions with a view to removing all danger to health in the industry.

(g) The study of processes, the encouragement of research, and the full utilisation of their results.

(h) The provision of facilities for the full consideration and the utilisation of inventions and improvements designed by

workpeople and for the adequate safeguarding of the rights of the designers of such improvements.

(i) Education in all its branches for the industry.

(j) The collection of full statistics on wages, making and selling prices, and average percentages of profits on turnover, and on materials, markets, costs, etc., and the study and promotion of scientific and practical systems of costing to this end.

All statistics shall, where necessary, be verified by Chartered Accountants, who shall make a statutory declaration as to secrecy prior to any investigation, and no particulars of individual firms or operatives shall be disclosed to any one.

(k) Enquiries into problems of the industry, and where desirable, the publication of reports.

(l) Representation of the needs and opinions of the industry to Government authorities, central and local, and to the community generally.

#### CONSTITUTION

(1) *Membership.* The Council shall consist of an equal number of representatives of the Manufacturers and the Operatives; the Manufacturers' representatives to be appointed by the Manufacturers' Associations in proportions to be agreed on between them; the Operatives' representatives by the Trade Unions in proportions to be agreed on between them. The number of representatives on each side shall not exceed 30. Among the Manufacturers' representatives may be included salaried managers, and among the Operatives' representatives some women operatives.

(2) *Honorary Members.* The Council to have the power to co-opt Honorary Members with the right to attend meetings or serve on committees of the Council, and to speak but not to vote.

(3) *Re-appointment.* One-third of the representatives of the said Associations and Unions shall retire annually, and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

(4) *Officers.* The Officers of the council shall be:—

(a) A Chairman and Vice-Chairman. When the Chairman is a member of the Operatives, the Vice-Chairman shall be a member of the Manufacturers, and vice-versa. The Chairman (or, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman) shall preside at all meetings, and shall have a vote, but not a casting

vote. It shall always be open to the Council to appoint an Independent Chairman, temporary or otherwise.

(b) Such Secretaries and Treasurers as the Council may require.

All Honorary Officers shall be elected by the Council at its annual meeting for a term of one year, and, subject to the condition that a Chairman or Vice-Chairman from the said Associations shall be succeeded by a member of the said Unions, shall be eligible for re-election. The Council may from time to time fix the remuneration to be paid to its Officers.

(5) *Committees.* The Council shall appoint an Executive Committee, and Standing Committees, representative of the different needs of the industry. It shall have power to appoint other Committees for special purposes, and to co-opt such persons of special knowledge, not being members of the Council, as may serve the special purposes of these committees. On all Committees both Manufacturers and Operatives shall be equally represented. The minutes of all Committees shall be submitted to the National Council for confirmation.

Each Committee shall appoint its own Chairman and Vice-Chairman, except in the case of the Finance Committee, over which Committee the Chairman of the National Council shall preside.

(6) *Finance.* The ordinary expenses of the Council shall be met by a levy upon the Manufacturers' Associations and the Trade Unions represented. Special expenditures shall be provided for by the Finance Committee.

(7) *Meetings.* The ordinary meetings of the Council shall be held quarterly. The annual meeting shall be held in January. A special meeting of the Council shall be held on the requisition of ten members of the Council. Seven days' notice of any meeting shall be given. Twenty members shall form a quorum. Committees shall meet as often as may be required.

(8) *Voting.* The voting upon all questions shall be by show of hands, and two-thirds majority of those present and voting shall be required to carry a resolution. Provided that, when at any meeting the representatives of the unions and the associations respectively, are unequal in numbers, all members present shall have the right to enter fully into discussion of any matters, but only an equal number of each of such representatives (to be decided amongst them) shall vote.

APPENDIX XII

WORKSHOP COMMITTEES

SUGGESTED LINES OF DEVELOPMENT

By C. G. RENOLD

(From the *Survey*, Oct. 6, 1918, which reprinted the pamphlet under cabled permission of the author.)

PREFACE

SOME time ago I was asked to prepare a memorandum on the subject of Workshop Committees, for presentation to the British Association, as a part of the report of a special sub-committee studying industrial unrest. The following pages contain the gist of that memorandum, and are now issued in this form for the benefit of some of those interested in the problem who may not see the original report.

I have approached the subject with the conviction that the worker's desire for more scope in his working life can best be satisfied by giving him some share in the directing of it; if not of the work itself, at least of the conditions under which it is carried out. I have tried, therefore, to work out in some detail the part which organisations of workers might play in works administration. And believing as I do, that the existing industrial system, with all its faults and injustices, must still form the basis of any future system, I am concerned to show that a considerable development of joint action between management and workers is possible, even under present conditions.

Many of the ideas put forward are already incorporated to a greater or lesser degree in the institution of these works, but these notes are not intended, primarily, as an account of our experiments, still less as a forecast of the future plans of



this firm. Our own experience and hopes do, however, form the basis of much here written, and have inevitably influenced the general line of thought followed.

Burnage Works, September, 1917.

C. G. Renold, Hans Renold Limited, Manchester.

#### INTRODUCTION

Throughout the following notes it is assumed that the need is realised for a new orientation of ideas with regard to industrial management. It is further assumed that the trend of such ideas must be in the direction of a devolution of some of the functions and responsibilities of management on to the workers themselves. These notes, therefore, are concerned mainly with considering how far this devolution can be carried under present conditions, and the necessary machinery for enabling it to operate.

Before passing, however, to detailed schemes, it is worth considering briefly what the aims of this devolution are.

It must be admitted that the conditions of industrial life fail to satisfy the deeper needs of the workers, and that it is this failure, even more than low wages, which is responsible for much of their general unrest. Now the satisfaction to be derived from work depends upon its being a means of self-expression. This again depends on the power of control exercised by the individual over the materials and processes used, and the conditions under which the work is carried out, or in the case of complicated operations, where the individual can hardly be other than a "cog in the machine,"—on the willingness, understanding, and imagination with which he undertakes such a rôle. In the past the movement in industry, in this respect, has been all in the wrong direction, namely, a continual reduction of freedom, initiative, and interest, involving an accentuation of the "cog-in-the-machine" status. Moreover, it has too often produced a "cog" blind and unwilling, with no perspective or understanding of the part it plays in the general mechanism of production, or even in any one particular series of operations.

Each successive step in the splitting up and specialising of operations has been taken with a view to promoting efficiency of production, and there can be no doubt that efficiency, in a material sense, has been achieved thereby, and the productivity

of industry greatly increased. This has been done, however, at the cost of pleasure and interest in work, and the problem now is how far these could be restored, as, for instance, by some devolution of management responsibility on to the workers, and how far such devolution is possible under the competitive capitalist system, which is likely to dominate industry for many long years to come.

Under the conditions of capitalist industry any scheme of devolution of management can only stand provided it involves no net loss of productive efficiency. It is believed, however, that even within these limits, considerable progress in this direction is possible, doubtless involving some detail loss, but with more than compensating gains in general efficiency. In this connection it must be remembered that the work of very many men, probably of most, is given more or less unwillingly, and even should the introduction of more democratic methods of business management entail a certain amount of loss of mechanical efficiency, due to the greater cumbersomeness of democratic proceedings, if it can succeed in obtaining more willing work and co-operation, the net gain in productivity would be enormous.

Important and urgent as is this problem of rearranging the machinery of management to enable responsibility and power to be shared with the workers, another and preliminary step is even more pressing. This is the establishing of touch and understanding between employer and employed, between management and worker. Quite apart from the many real grievances under which workers in various trades are suffering at the present time, there is a vast amount of bad feeling, due to misunderstanding, on the part of each side, of the aims and motives of the other. Each party, believing the other to be always ready to play foul, finds in every move easy evidence to support its bitterest suspicions. The workers are irritated beyond measure by the inefficiency and blundering in organisation and management which they detect on every side, and knowing nothing of business management cannot understand or make allowance for the enormous difficulties under which employers labour at the present time. Similarly, employers are too ignorant of trade union affairs to appreciate the problems which the present "lightning transformation" of industry presents to those responsible for shaping trade union policy; nor is the employer generally in close enough human touch to realise

the effect of the long strain of war work, and of the harassing restrictions of personal liberty.

More important therefore than any reconstruction of management machinery, more important even than the remedying of specific grievances, is the establishing of some degree of *ordinary human touch and sympathy between management and men.*

This also has an important bearing on any discussion with regard to developing machinery for joint action. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the hopefulness of any such attempt lies, not in the perfection of the machinery, nor even in the wideness of the powers of self-government granted to the workers, but in the degree to which touch and, if possible, friendliness can be established. It should be realised, for instance, by employers, that time spent on discussing and ventilating alleged grievances which turn out to be no grievances, may be quite as productive of understanding and good feeling as the removal of real grievances.

Passing now to constructive proposals for devolution of management, the subject is here dealt with mainly in two stages.

Under Section I, some of the functions of management which most concern the workers are considered, with a view to seeing how far the autocratic (or bureaucratic) secrecy and exclusiveness which usually surround business management, as far as workers are concerned, is really unavoidable, or how far it could be replaced by democratic discussion and joint action. The conclusion is that there is no reason inherent in the nature of the questions themselves why this cannot be done to a very considerable extent.

Section II deals with the second stage referred to, and considers the machinery needed to make such joint action, as is suggested in Section I, workable—a very different matter from admitting that in itself it is not impossible! The apparent complication of such machinery is doubtless a difficulty, but it is not insuperable, and is in practice less formidable than it seems at first sight. It must be realised, however, that the degree of elaboration of the machinery for joint working, adopted by any particular industry or firm, must be in relation to the elaboration of the existing management system. It would be quite impossible for many of the refinements of discussion and joint action suggested to be adopted by a firm whose ordinary business organisation was crude, undeveloped, and un-

systematic. This point is more fully dealt with in this section.

Section III contains a summary of the scheme of Committees contained in Section II, showing the distribution to each committee of the various questions discussed in Section I.

In Section IV some comments are made, based on actual experience of an attempt to institute machinery of the kind discussed, and some practical hints are given which may be of assistance to others.

I. SCOPE OF WORKERS' SHOP ORGANISATIONS; MANAGEMENT  
QUESTIONS WHICH COULD BE DEVOLVED, WHOLLY  
OR IN PART

It is proposed in this section to consider the activities which organisations of workers within the workshop might undertake without any radical reorganisation of industry. What functions and powers, usually exercised by the management, could be devolved on to the workers, and what questions, usually considered private by the management, could be made the subject of explanation and consultation? The number of such questions as set out in this section may appear very formidable, and is possibly too great to be dealt with, except by a very gradual process. No thought is given at this stage, however, to the machinery which would be necessary for achieving so much joint working, the subject being considered rather with a view to seeing how far, and in what directions, the inherent nature of the questions themselves would make it possible or advisable to break down the censorship and secrecy which surround business management.

In the list which follows, obviously not all questions are of equal urgency, those being most important which provide means of consultation and conciliation in regard to such matters as most frequently give rise to disputes, namely, wage and piece-rate questions, and to a lesser degree, workshop practices and customs. Any scheme of joint working should begin with these matters, the others being taken over as the machinery settles down and it is found practicable to do so. How far any particular business can go will depend on the circumstances of the trade, and on the type of organisation in operation.

Though machinery for conciliation in connection with existing troubles, such as those mentioned, must be the first care, some of the other matters suggested in this section—*e.g.*, safety



and hygiene, shop amenities, etc.—should be dealt with at the earliest possible moment. Such subjects, being less controversial, offer an easier means of approach for establishing touch and understanding between managers and men.

The suggestions in this section are divided into two main groups, but this division is rather a matter of convenience than an indication of any vital difference in nature. The suggestions are arranged in order of urgency, those coming first where the case for establishing a workers' shop organisation is so clear as to amount to a right, and passing gradually to those where the case is more and more questionable. The first group, therefore, contains all those items where the case is clearest and in connection with which the immediate benefits would fall to the workers. The second group contains the more questionable items, which lie beyond the region where the shoe actually pinches the worker. These questions are largely educational, and the immediate benefit of action, considered as a business proposition, would accrue to the management through the greater understanding of management and business difficulties on the part of the workers.

### 1. *Questions in Connection with Which Shop Organisations Would Primarily Benefit the Workers*

This group deals with those matters where the case for establishing shop organisations, to meet the need of the workers, is clearest.

(a) *Collective Bargaining*: There is a need for machinery for carrying this function of the trade union into greater and more intimate workshop detail than is possible by any outside body. A workshop organisation might supplement the ordinary trade union activities in the following directions:—

(1.) **WAGES** (Note.—General standard rates would be fixed by negotiation with the trade union for an entire district, not by committees of workers in individual works).

To ensure the application of standard rates to individuals, to see that they get the benefit of the trade union agreements.

When a *scale* of wages, instead of a single rate, applies to a class of work (the exact figure varying according to the experience, length of service, etc., of the worker) to see that such scales are applied fairly.

To see that promises of advances (such as those made, for instance, at the time of engagement) are fulfilled.

To see that apprentices, on completing their time, are raised to the standard rate by the customary or agreed steps.

(2.) **PIECE WORK RATES:** (It is assumed that the general method of rate fixing—*e. g.*, the adoption of time study or other method—would be settled with the local trade unions.)

To discuss with the management the detailed methods of rate fixing, as applied either to individual jobs or to particular classes of work.

Where there is an agreed relation between time rates and piece rates as, for instance, in engineering, to see that individual piece rates are so set as to yield the standard rate of earning.

To discuss with the management reduction of piece rates where these can be shown to yield higher earnings than the standard.

To investigate on behalf of the workers complaints as to inability to earn the standard rate. For this purpose all the data and calculations, both with regard to the original setting of the rate and with regard to time booking on a particular job, would have to be open for examination.

Note.—It is doubtful whether a shop committee, on account of its cumbersomeness, could ever handle detail, individual rates, except where the jobs dealt with are so large or so standardised as to make the number of rates to be set per week quite small. A better plan would be for a representative of the workers, preferably paid by them, to be attached to the rate-fixing department of a works, to check all calculations, and to look after the workers' interests generally. He would report to a shop committee, whose discussions with the management would then be limited to questions of principle.

(3.) **WATCHING THE APPLICATION OF SPECIAL LEGISLATION, AWARDS, OR AGREEMENTS**—*E. G.*: Munitions of war act, dilution, leaving certificates, etc.; Recruiting, exemptions; After-war arrangements, demobilisation of war industries, restoration of trade union conditions, etc.

(4.) **TOTAL HOURS OF WORK:** To discuss any proposed change in the length of the standard week. This could only be done by the workers' committee of an individual firm, provided the change were *within* the standards fixed by agreement with the local union or those customary in the trade.

(5.) NEW PROCESSES OR CHANGE OF PROCESS: Where the management desire to introduce some process which will throw men out of employment, the whole position should be placed before a shop committee to let the necessity be understood, and to allow it to discuss how the change may be brought about with the least hardship to individuals.

(6.) GRADES OF WORKER FOR TYPES OF MACHINE: Due to the introduction of new types of machines, and to the splitting up of processes, with the simplification of manipulation sometimes entailed thereby, the question of the grade of worker to be employed on a given type of machine continually arises. Many such questions are so general as to be the subject of trade union negotiation, but many more are quite local to particular firms. For either kind there should be a works committee within the works to deal with their application there.

(b) *Grievances*: The quick ventilating of grievances and injustices to individuals or to classes of men, is of the greatest importance in securing good feeling. The provision of means for voicing such complaints acts also as a check to petty tyranny, and is a valuable help to the higher management in giving an insight into what is going on.

A shop committee provides a suitable channel in such cases as the following:—

Alleged petty tyranny by foremen; hard cases arising out of too rigid application of rules, etc.; alleged mistakes in wages or piece work payments; wrong dismissal, *e. g.*, for alleged disobedience, etc., etc.

In all cases of grievances or complaints it is most important that the body bringing them should be of sufficient weight and standing to speak its mind freely.

(c) *General Shop Conditions and Amenities*: On all those questions which affect the community life of the factory, the fullest consultation is necessary, and considerable self-government is possible.

The following indicate the kind of question:—

(1.) SHOP RULES: Restriction of smoking; tidiness, cleaning of machines, etc.; use of lavatories and cloakrooms; provision, care and type of overalls; time-booking arrangements; wage-paying arrangements, etc., etc.

(2.) MAINTENANCE OF DISCIPLINE: It should be possible to promote such a spirit in a works that, not only could the

workers have a say in the drawing up of Shop Rules, but the enforcing of them could also be largely in their hands.

This would be particularly desirable with regard to enforcing good time-keeping; maintaining tidiness; use of lavatories and cloakrooms; promoting a high standard of general behaviour, etc., etc.

(3.) WORKING CONDITIONS: Meal hours, starting and stopping times; arrangements for holidays, etc.; arrangement of shifts, night work, etc.

(4.) ACCIDENTS AND SICKNESS: Safety appliances and practices; machine guards, etc.; administration of First Aid; rest room arrangements; medical examination and advice.

(5.) DINING SERVICE: Consultation *re* requirements; criticisms of and suggestions *re* service; control of discipline and behaviour; seating arrangements, etc.

(6.) SHOP COMFORT AND HYGIENE: Suggestions *re* temperature, ventilation, washing accommodation, drying clothes, etc.; provision of seats at work, where possible; drinking water supply.

(7.) BENEVOLENT WORK: Shop collections for charities or hard cases among fellow workers; sick club, convalescent, etc.; saving societies;

(d) *General Social Amenities*: A works tends to become a centre of social activities having no direct connection with its work, for example:

Works picnics; games, *e. g.*, cricket, football, etc.; musical societies; etc., etc.

These should be all organised by committees of the workers and not by the management.

## 2. *Questions on Which Joint Discussions Would Primarily be of Advantage to the Management*

In this group are those questions with regard to which there is no demand put forward by the workers, but where discussion and explanation on the part of the management would be desirable, and would tend to ease some of the difficulties of management. The institution of works committees would facilitate discussion and explanation in the following instances:—

(a) *Interpretation of Management to Workers*: In any case of new rules or new developments, or new workshop policy,



there is always the greatest difficulty in getting the rank and file to understand what the management is "getting at." However well-meaning the change may be as regards the workers, the mere fact that it is new and not understood is likely to lead to opposition. If the best use is made of committees of workers, such changes, new developments, etc., would have been discussed, and explained to them, and it is not too much to expect that the members of such committees would eventually spread a more correct and sympathetic version of the management's intentions among their fellow-workers than these could get in any other way.

(b) *Education in Shop Processes and Trade Technique*: The knowledge of most workers is limited to the process with which they are concerned, and they would have a truer sense of industrial problems if they understood better the general technique of the industry in which they are concerned, and the relation of their particular process to others in the chain of manufacture from raw material to finished article.

It is possible that some of this education should be undertaken by technical schools, but their work in this respect can only be of a general nature, leaving still a field for detailed teaching which could only be undertaken in connection with an individual firm, or a small group of similar firms. Such education might well begin with the members of the committee of workers, though if found feasible it should not stop there, but should be made general for the whole works. Any such scheme should be discussed and worked out in conjunction with a committee of workers, in order to obtain the best from it.

(c) *Promotion*: It is open to question whether the filling of any given vacancy could profitably be discussed between the management and the workers.

In connection with such appointments as shop foremen, where the position is filled by promoting a workman or "leading hand," it would at least be advisable to announce the appointment to the workers' committee before making it generally known. It might perhaps be possible to explain why a particular choice had been made. This would be indicated fairly well by a statement of the qualities which the management deemed necessary for such a post, thereby tending to head off some of the jealous disappointment always involved in such promotions, especially where the next in seniority is not taken.

It has of course been urged, generally by extremists, that

workmen should choose their own foremen by election, but this is not considered practical politics at present, though it may become possible and desirable when workers have had more practice in the exercise of self-management to the limited degree here proposed.

One of the difficulties involved in any general discussion of promotions is the fact that there are so many parties concerned, and all from a different point of view. For example, in the appointment of a foreman, the workers are concerned as to how far the new man is sympathetic and helpful, and inspiring to work for. The other foremen are concerned with how far he is their equal in education and technical attainments, social standing, length of service, *i.e.*, as to whether he would make a good colleague. The manager is concerned, among other qualities, with his energy, loyalty to the firm, and ability to maintain discipline. Each of these three parties is looking for three different sets of qualities, and it is not often that a candidate can be found to satisfy all. Whose views then should carry most weight—the men's, the other foremen's, or the manager's?

It is quite certain, however, that it is well worth while making some attempt to secure popular understanding and approval of appointments made, and a workers' committee offers the best opportunity for this.

It would be possible to discuss a vacancy occurring in any grade with all the others in that grade. For example, to discuss with all shop foremen the possible candidates to fill a vacancy among the foremen. This is probably better than no discussion at all, and the foremen might be expected, to some extent, to reflect the feeling among their men. Here again, the establishing of any such scheme might well be discussed with the committee of workers.

(*d*) *Education in General Business Questions:* This point is still more doubtful than the preceding. Employers continually complain that the workers do not understand the responsibilities and the risks which they, as employers, have to carry, and it would seem desirable therefore to take some steps to enable them to do so. In some directions this would be quite feasible, *e.g.*:

(1.) The reasons should be explained and discussed for the establishment of new works departments, or the re-organisation

of existing ones, the relation of the new arrangement to the general manufacturing policy being demonstrated.

(2.) Some kind of simplified works statistics might be laid before a committee of workers. For example: Output; cost of new equipment installed; cost of tools used in given period; cost of raw material consumed; number employed; amount of bad work produced.

(3.) Reports of activities of other part of the business might be laid before them.

(a) From the commercial side, showing the difficulties to be met, the general attitude of customers to the firm, etc.

(b) By the chief technical departments, design office, laboratory, etc., as to the general technical developments or difficulties that were being dealt with. Much of such work need not be kept secret, and would tend to show the workers that other factors enter into the production of economic wealth besides manual labour.

(4.) Simple business reports, showing general trade prospects, might be presented. There are perhaps most difficult to give in any intelligible form, without publishing matter which every management would object to showing. Still, the attempt would be well worth making, and would show the workers how narrow is the margin between financial success and failure on which most manufacturing business works. Such statistics might, perhaps, be expressed not in actual amounts, but as proportions of the wage bill for the same period.

## 2. TYPES OF ORGANISATION

Having dealt in the previous section with the kinds of questions, which, judged simply by their nature, would admit of joint discussion or handling, it is now necessary to consider what changes are needed in the structure of business management to carry out such proposals. The development of the necessary machinery presents very considerable difficulties on account of the slowness of action and lack of executive precision which almost necessarily accompany democratic organisation, and which it is the express object of most business organisations to avoid.

The question of machinery for joint discussion and action is considered in this section in three aspects:—

The requirements which such machinery must satisfy; the

influence of various industrial conditions on the type of machinery likely to be adopted in particular trades or works; some detailed suggestions of shop committees of carrying scope.

(1.) *Requirements to Be Satisfied*

(a) *Keeping in Touch with the Trade Unions:* It is obvious that no works committee can be a substitute for the trade union, and no attempt must be made by the employer to use it in this way. To allay any trade union suspicion that this is the intention, and to ensure that the shop committee links up with the trade union organisation, it would be advisable to see that the trade union is represented in some fairly direct manner. This is specially important for any committee dealing with wages, piece work and such other working conditions as are the usual subject of trade union action.

In the other direction, it will be necessary for the trade unionists to develop some means of working shop committees into their scheme of organisation, otherwise there will be the danger of a works committee, able to act more quickly through being on the spot, usurping the place of the local district committee of the trade unions.

(b) *Representation of all Grades:* The desirability of having all grades of workers represented on works committees is obvious, but it is not always easy to carry out owing to the complexity of the distribution of labour in most works. Thus, it is quite common for a single department, say in an engineering works, to contain several grades of workers, from skilled tradesmen to labourers, and possibly women. These grades will belong to different unions, and there may even be different, and perhaps competing, unions represented in the same grade. Many of the workers also will not be in any union at all.

(c) *Touch with Management:* As a large part of the aim of the whole development is to give the workers some sense of management problems and point of view, it is most desirable that meetings between works committees and management should be frequent and regular, and not looked on merely as means of investing grievances or deadlocks when they arise. The works committee must not be accidental excrescence on the management structure, but must be worked into it so as to become an integral part, with real and necessary functions.

(d) *Rapidity of Action:* Delays in negotiations between em-



ployers and labour are a constant source of irritation to the latter. Every effort should be made to reduce them. Where this is impossible, due to the complication of the questions involved, the works committee should be given enough information to convince it of this, and that the delay is not a deliberate attempt to shirk the issue.

On the other hand, the desire to attain rapidity of action should not lead to haphazard and "scratch" discussions or negotiations. These will only result in confusion, owing to the likelihood that some of those who ought to take part or be consulted over each question will be left out, or have insufficient opportunity for weighing up the matter. The procedure for working with or through works committees must, therefore, be definite and constitutional, so that, every one knows how to get a grievance or suggestion put forward for consideration, and every one concerned will be sure of receiving due notice of the matter.

The procedure must not be so rigid, however, as to preclude emergency negotiations to deal with sudden crises.

(2.) *Influence of Various Industrial Conditions on the Type of Organisation of Shop Committees*

There is no one type of shop committee that will suit all conditions. Some industries can develop more easily in one direction and some in another, and in the sub-section are pointed out some of the conditions which are likely to influence this.

(a) *Type of Labour*: The constitution of works committees, or the scheme of committees, which will suitably represent the workers of any particular factory, will depend very largely on the extent to which different trades and different grades of workers are involved.

In the simplest kind of works, where only one trade or craft is carried out, the workers, even though of different degrees of skill, would probably all be eligible for the same trade union. In such a case a purely trade union organisation, but based of course on works departments, would meet most of the requirements, and would probably, in fact, be already in existence.

In many works, however, at least in the engineering industry, a number of different "trades" are carried on. For instance, turning, automatic machine operating, blacksmith-

ing, pattern-making, foundry work, etc. Many of these trades are represented by the same trade union, though the interests of the various sections are often antagonistic, e.g., in the case of turners and automatic machine operators. Some of the other trades mentioned belong to different unions altogether. In addition to these "tradesmen," will be found semi-skilled and unskilled labourers. For the most part these will belong to no union, though a few may belong to labouring unions which, however, have no special connection with the engineering unions. In addition to all these, there may be women whose position in relation to men's unions is still uncertain, and some of whose interests will certainly be opposed to those of some of the men.

The best way of representing all these different groups will depend on their relative proportion and distribution in any given works. Where women are employed in any considerable numbers it will probably be advisable for them to be represented independently of the men. For the rest it will probably be necessary to have at least two kinds of works committees: one representing trade unionists as such, chosen for convenience by departments, the other representing simply works departments. The first would deal with wages and the type of question usually forming the subject of discussion between employers and trade unions. The other would deal with all other workshop conditions. The first, being based on trade unions, would automatically take account of distinctions between different trades and different grades, whereas the second would be dealing with those questions in which such distinctions do not matter very much.

(b) *Stability and Regularity of Employment*: Where work is of an irregular or seasonal nature and workers are constantly being taken on and turned off, only the very simplest kind of committee of workers would be possible. In such industries probably nothing but a trade union organisation within the works would be possible. This would draw its strength from the existence of the trade union outside, which would, of course, be largely independent of trade fluctuations, and would be able to reconstitute the works committee as often as necessary, thus keeping it in existence, even should most of the previous members have been discharged through slackness.

(c) *Elaboration of Management Organisation*: The extent to which management functions can be delegated, or management questions and policy be discussed with the workers de-

pendes very largely on the degree of completeness with which the management itself is organised. Where this is haphazard and management consists of a succession of emergencies, only autocratic control is possible, being the only method which is quick-acting and mobile enough. Therefore, the better organised and more constitutional (in the sense of having known rules and procedures) the management is, the more possible is it for policy to be discussed with the workers.

### (3.) *Some Schemes Suggested*

The following suggestions for shop organisations of workers are intended to form one scheme. Their individual value, however, does not depend on the adoption of the scheme as a whole, each being good as far as it goes.

(a) *Shop Stewards Committee*: As pointed out in the last sub-section, in a factory where the trade union is strong, there will probably be a shop stewards or trade union committee already in existence. This is, of course, a committee of workers only, elected generally by the trade union members in the works, to look after their interests and to conduct negotiations for them with the management. Sometimes the stewards carry out other purely trade union work, such as collecting subscriptions, obtaining new members, explaining union rules, etc. Such a committee is the most obvious and simplest type of works committee, and where the composition of the shop is simple, *i.e.*, mainly one trade, with no very great differences in grade, a shop stewards committee could deal with many of the questions laid down as suitable for joint handling.

It is doubtful, however, whether a shop stewards committee can, or should, cover the full range of workers' activities, except in the very simplest type of works. The mere fact that, as a purely trade union organisation, it will deal primarily with wages and piece-work questions, will tend to introduce an atmosphere of bargaining, which would make the discussion of more general questions very difficult. Further, such a committee would be likely to consider very little else than the interests of the trade union, or of themselves as trade unionists. While this is no doubt quite legitimate as regards such questions as wages, the more general questions of work-shop amenities should be considered from the point of view of the works as a community in which the workers have common interests

with the management in finding and maintaining the best conditions possible. Moreover, in many shops, where workers of widely differing grades and trades are employed, a shop stewards committee is not likely to represent truly the whole of the workers, but only the better organised sections.

The shop stewards committee, in the engineering trade at least, is fairly certain to constitute itself without any help from the management. The management should hasten to recognise it, and give it every facility for carrying on its business, and should endeavour to give it a recognised status and to impress it with a sense of responsibility.

It would probably be desirable that shop stewards should be elected by secret ballot rather than by show of hands in open meeting, in order that the most responsible men may be chosen, and not merely the loudest talkers or the most popular. It seems better, also, that stewards should be elected for a certain definite term, instead of holding office, as is sometimes the case now, until they resign, leave the firm, or are actually deposed. The shop stewards committee, being primarily a workers' and trade union affair, both these points are outside the legitimate field of action of the management. The latter's willingness to recognise and work through the committee should, however, confer some right to make suggestions even in such matters as these.

The facilities granted by the management might very well include a room on the works premises in which to hold meetings, and a place to keep papers, etc. If works conditions make it difficult for the stewards to meet out of work hours, it would be well to allow them to hold committee meetings in working hours at recognised times. The management should also arrange periodic joint meetings with the committee, to enable both sides to bring forward matters of discussion.

The composition of the joint meeting between the committee of shop stewards and the management is worth considering shortly. In the conception here set forth the shop stewards committee is a complete entity by itself; it is not merely the workers' section of some larger composite committee of management and workers. The joint meetings are rather in the nature of a standing arrangement on the part of the management for receiving deputations from the workers. For this purpose the personnel of the management section need not be fixed, but could well be varied according to the subjects to be dis-



cussed. It should always include, however, the highest executive authority concerned with the works. For the rest, there might be the various departmental managers, and, sometimes, some of the foremen. As the joint meeting is not an instrument of management, taking decisions by vote, the number of the management contingent does not really matter, beyond assuring that all useful points of view are represented.

Too much importance can hardly be laid on the desirability of regular joint meetings, as against *ad hoc* meetings called to discuss special grievances. According to the first plan, each side becomes used to meeting the other in the ordinary way of business, say once a month, when no special issue is at stake, and no special tension is in the air. Each can hardly fail to absorb something of the other's point of view. At a special *ad hoc* meeting, on the other hand, each side is apt to regard as its business, not the discussion of a question on its merits, but simply the making out of a case. And the fact that a meeting is called specially means that expectations of results are raised among the other workers, which make it difficult to allow the necessary time or number of meetings for the proper discussion of a complicated question.

Where women are employed in considerable numbers along with men, the question of their representation by stewards becomes important. It is as yet too early to say how this situation can best be met. If they are eligible for membership of the same trades unions as the men, the shop stewards committee might consist of representatives of both. But, considering the situation which will arise after the war, when the interests of the men and of the women will often be opposed, this solution does not seem very promising at present.

Another plan would be for a separate women's shop stewards committee to be formed, which would also meet the management periodically and be, in fact, a duplicate of the men's organisation. It would probably also hold periodic joint meetings with the men's committee, to unify their policies as far as possible. This plan is somewhat cumbersome, but seems to be the only one feasible at present on account of the divergence of interest and the very different stage of development in organisation of men and women.

(b) *Social Union*: Some organisation for looking after recreation is in existence in many works, and if not, there is

much to be said for the institution of such a body as the social union here described.

Although the purpose which calls together the members of a works community is, of course, not the fostering of social life and amenities, there is no doubt that members of such communities do attain a fuller life and more satisfaction from their association together, when common recreation is added to common work. It may, of course, be urged against such a development of community life in industry, that it is better for people to get away from their work and to meet quite another set in their leisure times. This is no doubt true enough, but the number of people who take advantage of it is probably very much less than would be affected by social activities connected with the works. The development of such activities will, in consequence, almost certainly have more effect in spreading opportunities for fuller life than it will have in restricting them. Moreover, if the works is a large one, the differences in outlook between the various sections are perhaps quite as great as can be met with outside. For this reason the cardinal principle for such organisations is to mix up the different sections and grades, especially the works and the office departments.

The sphere of the social union includes all activities other than those affecting the work for which the firm is organised. This sphere being outside the work of the firm, the organisation should be entirely voluntary and in the hands of the workers, though the management may well provide facilities such as rooms and playing fields.

Two main schemes of organisation are usual. In the first a general council is elected by the members, or, if possible, by all the employés, irrespective of department or grade. This council is responsible for the general policy of the social union, holds the funds, and undertakes the starting and supervising of smaller organisations for specific purposes. Thus, for each activity a club or society would be formed under the auspices of the council. The clubs would manage their own affairs and make their own detail arrangements.

It is most desirable that the social union should be self-supporting as far as running expenses go, and should not be subsidised by the management, as is sometimes done. A small subscription should be paid weekly by every member, such subscription admitting them to any or all clubs. The funds

should be held by the council, and spent according to the needs of the various clubs, not according to the subscriptions traceable to the membership of each. This is very much better than making the finances of each club self-supporting, since it emphasises the "community" feeling, is very simple, and enables some forms of recreation to be carried on which could not possibly be made to pay for themselves.

The second general type of social union organisation involves making the clubs themselves the basis. Each levies its own subscriptions and pays its own expenses, and the secretaries of the clubs form a council for general management. This is a less desirable arrangement because each member of the council is apt to regard himself as there only to look after the interests of his club, rather than the whole. The starting of new activities is also less easy than under the first scheme.

(c) *Welfare Committee*: The two organisations suggested so far, *viz.*, shop stewards committee and social union, do not cover the whole range of functions outlined in Section I. In considering how much of that field still remains to be covered, it is simplest first to mark off, mentally, the sphere of the social union, *viz.*, social activities outside working hours. This leaves clear the real problem, *viz.*, all the questions affecting the work and the conditions of work of the firm. These are then conceived as falling into two groups. First there are those questions in which the interests of the workers may be opposed to those of the employer. These are concerned with such matters as wage and piece rates, penalties for spoiled work, etc. With regard to these discussion is bound to be of the nature of bargaining, and these are the field for the shop stewards committee, negotiating by means of the periodical joint meetings with the management.

There remains, however, a second class of question, in which there is no clash of interest between employer and employed. These are concerned mainly with regulating the "community life" of the works, and include all questions of general shop conditions and amenities, and the more purely educational matters. For dealing with this group a composite committee of management and workers, here called the Welfare Committee, is suggested.

This would consist of two parts: Representatives elected by workers, and nominees of the management.

The elected side might well represent the offices, both tech-

nical and clerical, as well as the works, and members would be elected by departments, no account being taken of the various grades. Where women are employed it would probably be desirable for them to elect separate representatives. If they are in departments by themselves, this would naturally happen. If the departments are mixed, the men and women of such departments would each send representatives.

The trade union or unions most concerned with the work of the firm should be represented in some fairly direct way. This might be done in either of two ways: first, if a shop stewards committee exists, it might be asked to send one or more representatives; second, or each of the main trade unions represented in the works might elect one or more representatives to represent their members as trade unionists.

The management section should contain, in general, the highest members of the management who concern themselves with the running of the works; it would be no use to have here men in subordinate positions, as much of the discussion would deal with matters beyond their jurisdiction. Moreover, the opportunity for the higher management to get into touch with the workers would be too important to miss. It is doubtful whether there is any need for the workers' section of the welfare committee to meet separately, though there is no objection to this if thought desirable. In any case a good many questions can be handed over by the joint meeting to sub-committees for working out, and such sub-committees can, where desirable, consist entirely of workers.

It may be urged that the welfare committee is an unnecessary complication, and, either that its work could be carried out by the shop stewards committee or that the work of both could be handled by a single composite shop committee of management and workers. In practice, however, a committee of the workers sitting separately to consider those interests that are, or appear to be, opposed, with regular deputations to the management, and a composite committee of workers and management sitting together to discuss identical interests would seem the best solution of a difficult problem.

Everything considered, therefore, there seems, in many works at least, to be a good case for the institution of both organisations, that of the shop stewards and that of the welfare committee. The conditions making the latter desirable and possible would seem to be:—



(1.) A management sufficiently methodical and constitutional to make previous discussion of developments feasible.

(2.) The conditions of employment fairly stable.

(3.) The trades and grades included in the shop so varied and intermixed as to make representation by a committee of trade union shop stewards incomplete.

### 3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF SECTIONS I AND 2

Gathering together the views and suggestions made in the foregoing pages, it is felt that three separate organisations within the works are necessary to represent the workers in the highly developed and elaborate organisms which modern factories tend to become.

It is not sufficient criticism of such a proposal to say that it is too complicated. Modern industry is complicated and the attempt to introduce democratic ideas into its governance will necessarily make it more so. As already pointed out, the scheme need not be accepted in its entirety. For any trade or firm fortunate enough to operate under simpler conditions than those here assumed, only such of the suggestions need be accepted as suit its case.

The scope of the three committees is shown by the following summary:

#### (a) *Shop Stewards Committee*

**SPHERE.** Controversial questions where interests of employer and worker are apparently opposed.

**CONSTITUTION.** Consists of trade unionist workers elected by works departments. Sits by itself, but has regular meetings with the management.

**EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS DEALT WITH:** Wage and piece rates; The carrying out of trade union agreements; Negotiations *re* application of legislation to the workers represented, *e. g.*, dilution, exemption from recruiting; The carrying out of national agreements *re* restoration of trade union conditions, demobilisation of war industries, etc.; Introduction of new processes; Ventilation of grievances *re* any of above; etc., etc.

#### (b) *Welfare Committee*

**SPHERE.** "Community" questions, where there is no clash between interests of employer and worker.

CONSTITUTION. Composite committee of management and workers, with some direct representation of trade unions. Sits as one body, with some questions relegated to sub-committees, consisting either wholly of workers or of workers and management, according to the nature of the case.

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS DEALT WITH: Shop rules; Such working conditions as starting and stopping times, meal hours, night shift arrangements, etc.; Accident and sickness arrangements; Shop comfort and hygiene; Benevolent work such as collections for charities, hard cases of illness or accident among the workers; Education schemes; Trade technique; New works developments; Statistics of works activity; Business outlook; Promotions—explanation and, if possible, consultation; Ventilation of grievances *re* any of above.

### (c) *Social Union*

SPHERE. Social amenities, mainly outside working hours.

CONSTITUTION. Includes any or all grades of management and workers. Governing body elected by members irrespective of trade, grade, or sex.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES: Institution of clubs for sports—cricket, football, swimming, etc. Recreative societies—orchestral, choral, debating, etc. Arranging social events—picnics, dances, etc. Provision of games, library, etc., for use in meal hours. Administration of club rooms.

## 4. COMMENTS ON WORKING

An attempt to institute a scheme of shop committees on the general lines of those here described revealed certain difficulties, of which the following are instances:

If a works committee is to deal with the actual conditions under which work is carried on, and if its work is to be real, there is every possibility of friction arising, due to the committee infringing the sphere of authority of the shop foremen. Not only will specific complaints and objections regarding actions or decisions of foremen be brought up, but more general questions of shop management will be discussed, on which the foremen would naturally expect to be consulted previously to their men. Some of these difficulties would be lessened if the foremen were members of the works committees, but this seems hardly possible, except in very small works.

It must never be forgotten that the foremen have definite management functions to perform which cannot be discharged if their authority is continually called in question, or if they are continually harassed by complaints behind their backs. Nor can they have any prestige if arrangements or rules affecting their control or method of management are made without them having their full share in the discussion of them. The difficulty arises, therefore, how on the one hand to maintain the foremen's position as a real link in the chain of executive authority, and on the other hand to promote direct discussion between the workers and the higher management. The solving of this difficulty depends to some extent at least on the devising of suitable procedure and machinery for keeping all grades of management in touch with each other, and for confining the activities of the works committees to fairly definite and known spheres.

The exact nature of this machinery would depend on the organisation of each particular firm. It will, in general, be advisable to lay down that previous notice shall be given of all subjects to be brought up at a works committee meeting, so that a full agenda may be prepared. This agenda should then be circulated freely among the shop foremen and other grades of management, so that they may know what is going forward. Full minutes of the proceedings of all meetings should be kept, and these again should be circulated to all grades of management.

To facilitate such arrangements it may be advisable for the management to provide a secretary whose duties would be twofold—the preparation of the agenda and the writing out and following up of the minutes. In making out the agenda the secretary should make full enquiries with regard to all subjects brought forward by workers, and should prepare a short statement of each case to issue with the agenda. The secretary in circulating the agenda would then be able to learn, from the foremen and others, to what extent each was interested or concerned in any particular item. Those specially concerned might then be invited to attend the meeting to take part in the discussion. If a foreman intimated that he had decided views on some subject and wished them to be taken into account, discussion at the meeting should be of preliminary nature only and limited to eliciting the full case as seen by the workers. Further discussion with the committee

would be reserved until the management had had time to consult the foremen or others concerned.

The certainty on the part of all grades of management that no subject would be discussed of which they had not had notice; the privilege of having final discussion of any subject postponed, pending the statement of their views; and finally the circulation of all minutes showing what took place at the meetings, should go a long way to making the works committees run smoothly.

For any recognised works committees the management should see that they have such facilities put at their disposal as will enable them to carry out their work, and will give them standing and authority in the works community. In the case of committees dealing with social work outside the direct work of the shop, all meetings and work can be expected to take place outside working hours. This should also apply in a general way to meetings of shop stewards or of the welfare committee, but it may happen as, for instance, where a night shift is being worked, that it is almost impossible for the members to get together except at some time during working hours. In such cases permission should be given for meetings at regular stated times, say once a fortnight, or once a month, and the attendance at these meetings would be considered part of the ordinary work of the members, and they would be paid accordingly. Where possible, however, it is very much better for meetings to be arranged entirely outside working hours, in which case no payment should be offered, the work being looked on as in the nature of voluntary public work.

A committee room should be provided, and in the case of the welfare committee, the secretary might also be provided by the management. For firms suitably placed it is most desirable that a playing field should be provided, suitably laid out for various games. Rent can be asked for it by the management if thought desirable and can be paid by a social union such as that described here. In the case of all kinds of recognised works committees the thing to aim at is to make their work an integral part of the organisation of the works community, providing whatever facilities are needed to make it effective. On the other hand, anything like subsidising of works committees by the management must be avoided.



## APPENDIX XIII

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS REACHED BY A GROUP OF TWENTY BRITISH QUAKER EMPLOYERS AFTER FOUR DAYS OF DISCUSSION IN 1917 AND 1918

For some time past a number of employers belonging to the Society of Friends have been feeling, as many others are doing, the duty of examining the way in which their religious faith can be given fuller expression in business life. The following statement, designed as a stimulus to practical action, is an attempt to see how the Quaker conception of the divine worth of all life, which is accepted in wide circles of thought to-day, affects our modern industrial life, and in particular the relationship between employers and employed.

There is perhaps nothing in this statement that is new, nothing that has not been found in the practise of some employers for years, nothing to which those responsible for the statement would have refused their assent before the war. But the period of reconstruction that must follow the war offers an opportunity for a general raising of industrial standards such as our generation has not had before, and imposes a corresponding obligation on each of us to define and face our personal responsibilities.

We have sought in the course of our discussions primarily to discover and define the duties of employers within the present industrial system, not because we hold a brief for it or regard it as ideal, but because the task of changing it immediately is beyond the power of individual employers or groups of employers. We should indeed, as citizens, work towards its alteration in so far as we regard it as inconsistent with the principles of our religion, but in the meantime we cannot afford to neglect the urgent needs and the outstanding opportunities which confront us in our own factories. For

most of us, does not our business afford the greatest opportunity we have of serving our fellow-men, and have we yet ever fully tested the potentialities of the present system, whatever criticisms may be urged against it, as a field for applied Christian ethics?

The point of view from which we have sought to approach the problem is that employers are persons fulfilling certain necessary functions of organisation in the great process of industry, side by side with all others engaged in performing the other functions necessary to the maintenance of that process, and that each of these functions demands its own qualities of character and capacity and carries with it its own obligations and responsibilities. We speak only for employers engaged in the actual management of businesses, but we wish to state our opinion that shareholders cannot divest themselves of their responsibility for the conditions under which their dividends are earned.

We place what we believe to be our true status and function in society in the forefront of our statement, because we believe that its full recognition is the first need of industry to-day. We believe that it is only in so far as those engaged in industry are inspired by a new spirit and regard industry as a national service, to be carried on for the benefit of the community, that any general improvement in industrial relations is possible.

With this initial word of explanation, we give our conclusions under the following heads:

Wages.

The Status of the Workers.

Security of Employment.

Working Conditions and the Social Life of the Workers.

Appropriation of "Surplus Profits."

#### WAGES

We believe that the following propositions may be laid down with regard to wages:

(1) In determining the rate of wage to be paid, a distinction must be drawn between the minimum or "basic" wage and wages above the minimum, which may be referred to as "secondary" wages. The former should be determined primarily by human needs; the latter by the value of the service

rendered, as compared with the value of the services rendered by workers who are receiving the basic or minimum wages.

(2) *The Basic Wages.*

(a) Men. The wages paid to a man of average industry and capacity should at least enable him to marry, to live in a decent house, and to provide the necessities of physical efficiency for a normal family, while allowing a reasonable margin for contingencies and recreation.

(b) Women. In the case of women engaged upon work which has hitherto been regarded as man's work, the payment should be equal for the same volume and quality of work, assuming equal adaptability to other necessary work.

In the case of purely women's work, the basic wage for a woman of average industry and capacity should be the sum necessary to maintain her in a decent dwelling and in a state of full physical efficiency, and to allow a reasonable margin for contingencies and recreation.

(3) *The Secondary Wage.*

The secondary wage is remuneration for any special gift, or qualification necessary for the performance of a particular function, *e. g.*, special skill as a tradesman; the special strength of some physical organ, as in the case of a gas stoker; special muscular training and power, such as that of a lumberman; responsibility for human life, as in the case of locomotive engine drivers.

We believe that if once the basic wage is fixed at a right level, the precise amount of the secondary wage to be paid for different services may be left, as at present, to bargaining. But in conducting such bargaining the employer should remember that the pleasure and varieties of life are just as dear to the workers as to himself, and they, too, need comfort, rest and change of scene.

It is recognised that the payment of wages on the above basis will require a larger increase in the wage rates in many industries than some of them could at present bear. We believe, however, that the payment of such wages should be regarded by employers as a necessary business liability. Till that is discharged they should very strictly limit their own remuneration for their services, nor should they pay larger dividends upon borrowed capital than is essential to ensure an adequate supply. But if at the moment really adequate wages cannot

be paid, the earnest attention of the management should be turned to improving the processes and general efficiency of their business organisation, by the use of engineering and chemical science, adequate costing systems, etc.

While we emphasise the obligation on employers to do everything in their power to ensure the businesses under their control shall be able to pay wages on the above basis, we believe that the coöperation of the employees in the form of better and more intelligent work will generally be needed to increase the funds available. The need of evoking this added interest and stimulating a coöperative spirit should be borne in mind when deciding on methods of remuneration.

It may be found that the most effective service can be rendered to the community in some industries only by some form of combination of independent firms. Where this is the case, we should assist in the organisation and management of such combinations, but only on condition that the consumer is effectively protected, by state action or otherwise, against exploitation.

#### STATUS

The worker asks to-day for more than an improvement in his economic position. He claims from employers and managers the clear recognition of his rights as a person. The justice of this claim our religion compels us to admit. We cannot regard human beings as if they were merely so many units of brain power, so many of nervous or muscular energy. We must coöperate with them, and treat them as we ourselves should wish to be treated. This position involves the surrender by capital of its supposed right to dictate to labour the conditions under which work shall be carried on. It involves more; the frank avowal that all matters affecting the workers should be decided in consultation with them, when once they are recognised as members of an all-embracing human brotherhood.

What machinery can be devised which will enable industry to adopt these principles, without endangering its productivity, on which the wages of both labour and capital ultimately depend?

In answering this question we shall make certain definite proposals, but we wish to preface them by stating our belief that the creation of machinery, however excellent, is less im-



portant than a living desire on the part of employers to give full expression to their fundamental religious beliefs in the relations they establish with their workers.

We now pass to detailed proposals.

The management of a business may be divided broadly under three heads:

(a) *Financial*

The provision of capital and appropriation of profit; relations with shareholders, bankers, competing businesses, the state, terms of credit, etc.

(b) *Commercial*

Determination of the general character of the goods to be manufactured or of the class of work to be undertaken; purchase of materials; sale of product; advertising.

(c) *Industrial*

Control of processes and machinery; nature of product; engagement and dismissal of employees; hours of work, rates of pay, bonuses, etc.; welfare work; shop discipline; relations with trade unions.

With the financial and commercial aspects of the business the worker is not at present so directly concerned, although indirectly they affect him vitally. But in the industrial policy of the business he is directly and continuously interested, and he is capable of helping to determine it. How can we give him an opportunity of doing this?

As an initial step, any existing shop committees, such as that of the shop stewards in engineering works, should be formally recognised. But, in the absence of such bodies, we recommend the establishment of committees or works councils, in which the chosen representatives of the workers should discuss matters which concern them, first alone, but secondly, and at frequent intervals, with the management. In this connection it would be essential to secure the coöperation of trade unions and to make it certain that their position would not be prejudiced by the existence of such councils. When practicable, it might be well to provide for the appointment by the trade union concerned of the employees to serve on the councils or committees, which should constitute the regular medium through which the employees address suggestions and complaints to the management, and discuss with it all proposed changes which are likely to affect them.

Questions of wage rates, discipline and shop rules, the engagement and dismissal of workers, the time and duration of factory holidays, adjustments of working hours and number of staff to meet shortage of work, health, canteen, and other social work might be referred to these councils for their opinion or decision. It is fully realised that experience on works councils may and should train the members for greater participation in the control of the business, and enable them ultimately to take part in the commercial and financial administration.

When industry, now being conducted by methods hurriedly devised to meet abnormal exigencies, is reestablished on a permanent peace footing, conditions will be widely different from those existing before the war. It is of the utmost importance that employers and workers should coöperate, frankly and cordially, in determining the new conditions. The application to individual firms of general principles agreed upon by the trade unions and employers might very suitably be discussed in the councils referred to above.

#### SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT

Regarding the industrial life of the worker from the standpoint of his whole personality, hardly anything is of greater moment than that while he is willing to work and capable of doing so he should be able to rely upon a regular income. It is universally acknowledged that insecurity of employment, which is found in the most aggravated form among casual workers, such as dockers, has a deteriorating effect on both physique and character. We believe, moreover, that restricted output, and opposition to the introduction of machinery, are almost always the result of the employee's fear that he or his fellow-worker may be thrown out of employment.

We believe that it is the duty of employers to do their utmost to abolish casual labour and to render employment as regular as possible.

It is not within the scope of this memorandum to discuss any measures which should be taken by the state, or by trade unions or employers' federations, in furtherance of these ends. But individual employers can and should, do much to remedy the present evil, and we make the following suggestions:

- (1) The business should be carefully organised

(a) With a view to reducing the employment of casual labour to the very lowest limit; and

(b) To regularising work throughout the year so far as possible.

(2) Where labour-saving machinery is introduced every effort should be made to absorb the workers displaced, without loss of wage, in other departments of the business. If this is impracticable, the firm should endeavour to find work for them elsewhere. The same rule applies to a temporary surplus of labour which may be created by any improvement in production.

A guarantee to absorb displaced workers in other departments may lead to a temporary surplus of labour, but in most cases this condition of things would soon be rectified by the normal and inevitable leakage of labour. A portion of any extra profits arising from labour-saving improvements might be placed to a special reserve fund to compensate workers who may be displaced and cannot be absorbed or placed elsewhere.

(3) The dismissal of employees should only take place as a disciplinary measure in the last resort. Only men and women who can be relied upon to act justly should be given the power of suspension; and appeal to the management should always be allowed before dismissal. The matter will frequently be one for consultation with the workers.

(4) When adolescents are employed on work which does not fit them for any adult occupation, special provision should be made either for their absorption when they reach adult age or for their training for some alternative occupation.

#### WORKING CONDITIONS

The working conditions of a factory should enable and encourage every worker to be and to do his best. These conditions may be considered under two heads.

##### *Personal Environment*

From the moment that a worker enters a factory he should be regarded as an integral part of a living organism, not a mere dividend-producing machine, and treated with respect and courtesy. There should be no nagging or bullying by those in authority, but, on the contrary, insight and leadership. This involves careful choice of overlookers and man-

agers, who should be able both to lead and inspire. At present such officers are often selected solely on account of their technical knowledge, and sometimes, it is to be feared, because they possess the faculty of getting work out of men by driving them.

But if the managers and foremen are to be men of the right type, they should have ample opportunities for becoming acquainted with the employer's point of view, and also for acquiring a broad, sane outlook on human and industrial relationships. Such opportunities could hardly be given in the course of one or two conferences; but a series of classes or conferences under inspiring leadership might be arranged, some for those already in positions of responsibility, others for those who desire to fit themselves for such posts in the future. The instruction given should cover a fairly wide field, and deal *inter alia* with economics, industrial history, trade unionism, and psychology.

We have been informed that in some localities much advantage has already been derived from such classes. Where they do not exist, we think that employers might suitably try to introduce them in connection with their own factories, or possibly in association with others in the neighbourhood.

It has been suggested, and the idea is well worthy of consideration, that workers might be encouraged to a far greater extent than is usual to make themselves responsible for maintaining discipline. We have been told of cases in which experiments in this direction have been markedly successful.

Happiness in work should be regarded as a definite aim and asset, and the personal well-being of every worker should be an essential part of the employer's objective.

### *Material Environment*

Employers should surround their employees with a material environment at work such as they would desire for themselves or for their children. This will mean that workrooms are properly ventilated and kept at suitable temperatures, that they are adequately lit, and that due regard is paid to cleanliness. Cloak-rooms and lavatories should be so kept that employees coming from well-kept homes may find no cause for complaint. The workers should be safeguarded against any



undue strain from the length of the working day or the severity of labour. In determining systems of payment it should never be forgotten that unwise methods of stimulating workers to do their utmost may result in overstrain. Facilities should be given them for spending the dinner-hour under restful and comfortable conditions, as well as for obtaining food at reasonable rates. If such facilities cannot be provided within the factory they might perhaps be arranged outside.

Again, in organising the work, employers should remember that confinement to one monotonous task, not only month after month but year after year, is apt to deaden the intellect and depress the vitality of the worker.

We have merely given examples of the many ways in which a fundamental religious principle must inevitably react upon the conditions of the factory. If it be urged that to carry out the above suggestions would often involve too great an expenditure, we reply that inefficiency and low productivity in the workers are frequently due to the absence of suitable working conditions.

### *Social Conditions*

We have considered the relation of the employer *as such* to the problems of providing adequate housing accommodation, and full facilities for the recreation and education of the workers. It seems to us, however, that his responsibility in this connection, as employer, ends with the payment of wages which will allow his workers to live in comfortable homes, and with the establishment of a working day which will leave them time for recreation, reading, or to attend educational classes. With the employer's duties *as citizen*, which will bring him into close touch, not only with the housing and educational problems but many others, we are not here concerned, with the proviso that his aim shall always be to subordinate industry to the needs of citizenship, rather than citizenship to the needs of industry. We welcome the legislative proposals now being made for the improvement of the national educational system, and consider that employers should put up with any inconvenience rather than hamper their achievement.

### APPROPRIATION OF "SURPLUS PROFITS"

We have discussed the principles which should be applied to the appropriation of "surplus profits" where such exist.

By "surplus profits" is here meant any surplus which may remain over when labour has been paid on the scale referred to above, and managers and directors have been remunerated according to the market value of their services; when capital has received the rate of interest necessary to ensure an adequate supply, having regard to the risk involved, and when necessary reserves have been made for the security and development of the business.

(1) Surplus profits may go to one or more of the following:

(a) The proprietors of the business, whether private individuals or ordinary shareholders.

(b) The directors and principal managers, who may or may not be the same as the persons mentioned under (a).

(c) The employees.

(d) The consumers.

(e) The community generally.

(2) We cannot believe that either the proprietors or the workers are entitled to the whole of the surplus profits of the business, though they might reasonably ask for such a share as would give them an interest in its financial prosperity.

(3) The consumer should never be exploited. The price charged to him should always be reasonable, having in view the average cost of production and distribution; and the state should be asked to interfere to protect his interests when they are threatened by monopoly.

(4) We believe that in equity the community may claim the greater part of surplus profits. If this is not taken in the form of taxation, we think that it should be regarded by those into whose hands it passes as held in trust for the community. We are not prepared to suggest in detail schemes by which such a trust should be administered. If the profits are taken in the ordinary way by the proprietors, they should be regarded as a trust and spent for the common good, or the proprietors might limit the amount they themselves took out of the business, while surplus profits were put into a separate account, and spent, at the joint discretion of the proprietors and workers, for the benefit of the general public. Our point is that the bulk of them at least belongs to the community, and should be used in its interests.

In this connection we would ask all employers to consider very carefully whether their style of living and personal ex-

penditure are restricted to what is needed to ensure the efficient performance of their functions in society. More than this is waste, and is, moreover, a great cause of class divisions.

#### CONCLUSION

In regard to many of the matters referred to in the preceding pages there is ample room for experiments. Pioneers and explorers, and "the makers of roads," are needed just as urgently in the industrial sphere as in the opening up of new tracts of fertile country. But we believe that if the longing for a better social order once grips the employing classes, such pioneers will not be lacking.

We believe it to be our duty to promote a progressive spirit in the various trade organisations with which we may be associated. In this connection we suggest the desirability of giving full information as to wages, average costs, and average profits in the industry, as a basis for effectual collective bargaining, and as a recognition of the public character of our industrial functions.

Some employer may tell us that we are asking him to draw too many practical inferences from a religious formula. But the conviction we have outlined is more than a formula. It is a vantage ground, from which we can survey the whole field of social and industrial life, seeing in it, not sheer blind turmoil, but a vast meaning and a vast hope. There is but one way of escaping from the implications of such a conviction, to abandon it entirely, to forsake the vantage ground, and to forget the only vision that could dominate our whole lives. Then the world of industry may revert to a soulless chaos in which we strive for our own ends. But those ends, even as we achieve them, will seem meaningless and vain.

Doubtless, to take the other course, and claim for our religious faith the final word upon the problems with which industry confronts us, may tax severely not only our financial resources, but heart, and will, and brain. But is this a disadvantage?

## APPENDIX XIV

### SHOP COMMITTEES AND LABOUR BOARDS

By ARTHUR GLEASON

(Reprinted from the *Survey*, May, 1917.)

WHAT is the workshop council? The head of one of the largest cocoa manufactories in the world has sent us the details of his council, as now in operation in the almond paste department. The cocoa business is not the best field for studying workers' control, because the labour is largely female, because the industry is not nationally organised like the building and engineering trades, and because the experiment is only in its beginning. But with a new application of a principle, we have to take it where we find it and push on with the experiment.

The departments of the factory have well defined sections, so each section has a sub- or sectional council. The number of delegates for each sectional council is fixed on the basis of one delegate for every twelve workers (of whatever age) or part of twelve exceeding six, employed in the section. Sitting with these at the meetings of each sectional council and having equal powers with them, are the manager of the department with the head and sub-overlookers, monitors or chargemen of the particular section. Should these, however (including the manager), exceed in number the workers' delegates, the members of the council representing the administration consist of the manager and head overlookers, together with as many of the sub-overlookers, chargemen and monitors (elected by ballot amongst themselves) as are required to make up a number equal to that of the workers' delegates. The manager of the department is ex-officio chairman of the sectional councils. He does not have a casting vote. In case of a drawn vote the matter is submitted to the director controlling the department.

In addition, there will be one delegate appointed by each



union concerned (for the men's sectional councils from the men's union, and for the women's sectional councils from the women's union), who shall be allowed to speak but shall have no vote. Such delegates shall be deemed to hold a watching brief for the union, but shall be in the employment of the firm and working in the department, and preferably, though not necessarily, in the section.

The departmental council is a distinct body from the sectional councils and consists of one member for every fifty workers (or part of fifty exceeding twenty-five), with an equal number of the administrative staff, namely, manager, head overlookers, sub-overlookers, monitors and chargemen. Where these exceed the workers, the members representing the administration will consist of the manager and head overlookers, together with as many of the sub-overlookers, chargemen and monitors (elected by ballot amongst themselves), as are required to make up a number equal to that of the workers' delegates.

At the meetings of the departmental councils there will also be one delegate appointed by the union representing the men and one by the union representing the women, who shall be allowed to speak, but shall have no votes. Such delegates shall be deemed to hold a watching brief for the union, but shall be in the employment of the firm and working in the department.

Further, the workers are entitled to have the attendance of a permanent official of their union, not necessarily in the employment of the firm, during the discussion of any matter on which they consider that they should have skilled assistance and advice. Any such official attending a departmental council meeting shall withdraw as soon as the matter is disposed of upon which his or her advice has been required.

Nothing that takes place at a sectional or departmental council shall prejudice the trade union in raising any question in the ordinary way. Questions of general principle, such as the working week, wage standards and general wage rules, shall not be within the jurisdiction of the councils.

All male employees over twenty-one years of age and all female employees over sixteen, who have been employed by the firms for six months (whether on the regular staff or not), will be eligible to vote for delegates to both the sectional or departmental councils and to become members of such coun-

cils. Delegates are elected to serve for one year. They will be eligible for re-election so long as they remain in the employment of the company. No deduction will be made from the wages of day-workers for the time occupied as delegates in attending the council meetings, and piece-workers will receive an average wage for the time so occupied.

Based on this constitution, the sectional and departmental councils in the almond paste department work out as follows:

### SECTIONAL

There are six sectional councils as under:

Women	(1)	Bottoms and centres.
	(2)	Pipers and coverers.
	(3)	Makers.
	(4)	Packers and labellers.
Men	(5)	Slab, machine and boiling (4th floor).
	(6)	Crystallising and piping (5th floor), cage and carting (3rd floor).

The number of delegates for each of these councils work out thus:

	No. of delegates
(1) Bottoms and Centres	
Bottoms—Room 1.....	2
Bottoms—Room 2 .....	2
Centres—Room 1 .....	3
Centres—Room 2 .....	1
Total .....	<hr/> 8
(2) Pipers and coverers	
Room 1 .....	11
Room 2 .....	5
Total .....	<hr/> 16
(3) Makers .....	6
(4) Packers and labellers	
Packers .....	9
Labellers .....	2
Total .....	<hr/> 11
(5) Slab, machine and boiling (4th floor).....	5
(6) Crystallising and Piping (5th floor) .....	6
Cage and carting (3rd floor) .....	1
Total .....	<hr/> 7

The number of delegates to the departmental council is shown below:

	No. of delegates
Bottoms and centres	
Bottoms—Rooms 1 and 2.....	1
Centres—Rooms 1 and 2.....	1
Pipers and coverers	
Room 1 .....	3
Room 2 .....	1
Makers .....	2
Packers and labellers .....	2
Slab, machine and boiling (4th floor).....	1
Crystallising and piping (5th floor) and cage and cart- ing (3rd floor) .....	1
Total .....	12

What are the matters dealt with by these works councils?

(1) The criticism of any piece wages not thought to be fair or adequate, and the consideration of suggestions for adjustment.

(2) The consideration of conditions and hours of work in the department.

(3) The consideration of departmental organisation and production.

(4) Rules and discipline.

### *In the Engineering Trades*

The engineering trades are perfecting a similar system of workers' control. F. S. Button, formerly of the executive council of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and G. D. H. Cole have drawn up the outline.

### SHOP COMMITTEES

The committee comprises representatives from the management and the workpeople in equal numbers. The management choose their own representatives. The workpeople elect by ballot their representatives. Care should be taken that the trade unions shall be represented. Each side appoints its own chairman and secretary. Each side submits its agenda to the other for discussion at joint meetings which should be held weekly during workshop hours to deal with:

1. Improved methods of manufacture, tools, jigs, gauges, and to make suggestions thereon; also new methods of production;

2. Class of labour to be used on new types or reconstructed machines;
3. Criticism and adjustment in existing piece-work prices;
4. Co-operation with the management in supervision;
5. Shop troubles and grievances;
6. Suspensions and dismissals consequent upon slackness in trade;
7. Shop rules—timekeeping, meal hours, cleaning time, clock allowances, changes in starting time;
8. Suggestions to change the method of remuneration from day work to piece work or a bonus system, or vice versa;
9. The problem of the disabled soldier;
10. Matters relating to welfare;
11. Demarcation between trades with the free sanction of the unions concerned;
12. Advise generally on labour and workshop conditions.

The committee must not interfere with recognised trade union practices nor deal with matters covered by agreements, except with approval of the parties concerned.

Where it is necessary owing to the complex organisation of the works to set up more than one shop committee, a

### CENTRAL WORKS COUNCIL

shall be formed from the shop committee.

The basis of representation shall in each case be the same. The board of directors shall appoint the chairman for its side, the trade union shall choose a representative workman as chairman for the side of the workpeople. The council shall sit during factory hours to deal with:

1. Reports from shop committees;
2. Refer back unadopted portions of report to shop committee concerned;
3. Decide matters from such reports which affect the factory as a whole as distinct from the shop;
4. Generally to assist the management in matters relating to production and organisation;
5. To initiate reforms arising out of new legislation affecting factories and workshops;
6. Assist after the war period in the resumption of existing laws;
7. Consider matters referred to them by the board of directors or the workpeople's side of the workshop committees;
8. To appoint a representative from each side of the council to sit with the board of directors when reports from the council are being considered.

No workshop committee or works council shall have any power to impose any restriction on the employers or workpeople either with regard to lock-outs or strikes, or to institute any system of profit-sharing or co-partnership.

The council must not interfere with recognised trade union practices nor deal with matters covered by agreements except with approval of the parties concerned.



## LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES

The members shall consist of an equal number of employers and workpeople appointed by the employers' associations and by the trade union organisations in the district.

Each side shall appoint a chairman and secretary. At local conferences each chairman shall preside over his own side. Each side shall be entitled to hold a preliminary meeting separately to consider and prepare its agenda and to discuss its policy on questions to be submitted to the local conferences.

The committee shall meet at least fortnightly, and the following matters should be within its competence:

1. References from each side of works council within its area;
2. Codification, unification and amendment of working rules:
  - (a) Holidays.
  - (b) Sunday labour.
  - (c) Overtime.
  - (d) Shift systems.
  - (e) Demarcation between classes of labour.
3. Co-ordination of local workshop practice;
4. General district matters relating to welfare work;
5. Discuss, by mutual consent and reference, matters covered by existing agreements.
6. Discuss relations between both sides not covered by existing agreements.

In the period succeeding the war the committee should also be encouraged to settle by agreement:

1. Questions arising out of the restoration of trade union conditions including questions of priority, of employment and the restoration of trade union rules and customs;
2. Problems of the employment of disabled soldiers and sailors;
3. Questions relating to demobilisation and the discharge and re-employment of emergency workers.

The committee shall take no action that contravenes any agreement between employers and the trade unions, whether such agreement be local or national in character.

## CENTRAL CONCILIATION BOARD

Such board shall be set up in each industry and shall be representative of the central executive of employers and the trade union or unions concerned;

The representation shall be equal in numbers, each side having the right to appoint a chairman and secretary.

Each side shall be entitled to hold a preliminary meeting to consider and discuss its policy on the agenda.

The matters competent for discussion shall be confined to:

1. Appeals from the local joint committees; appeals may be made by each side of the local joint committees. Representatives from the local joint committees shall attend in a consultative capacity, but shall not sit in session or take official part in the proceedings;
2. Discuss relations between employers and workpeople not cov-

ered by existing agreements; no new agreements to be arranged without the full concurrence of all parties concerned;

3. Act as a permanent advisory board to the government on all questions affecting the industry, and to be empowered to suggest alterations, modifications and additions to existing laws, or fresh enactments required;

4. Such proposed new legislation or amendments to existing laws to be submitted to the department of state concerned;

5. In the event of such department of state refusing to accept in whole or part such proposals, the central conciliation board should have the right to appeal to the Cabinet and to state its reasons for tabling its proposals;

6. The Cabinet shall not have the absolute right to veto without an appeal and vote in the House of Commons, on the question raised.

### BENEFITS RESULTING TO INDUSTRY

1. Harmony in the factory, workshop or mine.
2. Assurance of industrial peace.
3. Would give the worker a real chance to achieve responsibility.
4. Guarantee of continuity of labour.
5. Tend to abolish the spirit of antagonism and distrust.
6. Greater productivity in the workshop.
7. Would provide the missing link in industry—co-operation.
8. Bring about a real community of interest between employers and workpeople, and secure co-ordination of the whole factory system so far as the workshop is concerned.

The executive committee of the National Union of Railwaymen have drawn up their demand. "At each large shop centre there shall be formed a local shops committee. There shall be a central committee for each railway. There shall be established on each railway a conciliation board." The following is an example of the method of constituting the board:

		No. of	No. of
Groups of grades		men	representatives
(a)	Engine drivers, firemen, cleaners, electric motormen .....	7,500	4
(b)	Shed men, electric light men, hydraulic men, etc. ....	1,900	1
(c)	Carriage and wagon examiners, washers, etc. ....	1,200	1
(d)	Signalmen, etc. ....	3,100	2
(e)	Guards, shunters, etc. ....	4,300	2
(f)	General porters, parcels, staff, etc. ....	3,500	2
(g)	Goods shed and yard staff .....	4,500	2
(h)	Cartage staff .....	3,700	2
(i)	Platelayers .....	4,600	2
(j)	Ballast men, etc. ....	2,000	1
(k)	Signal and telegraph men, etc. ....	500	1

A builders' national industrial parliament has been advocated by the National Associated Building Trades Council, representing the national executives of the principal trade unions in the industry. The constitution calls for works committees, representing management and labour in particular shops, for joint district boards, and for a national parliament, where sit twenty members appointed by the National Federation of Building Trades Employers of Great Britain and Ireland, and twenty members appointed by the National Associated Building Trades Council.

So enters the principle of self-government in industry. This is totally different from compulsory arbitration, though often confused with it. Arbitration deals with matters that have reached the boiling point. A joint board deals with process and relationship before friction has developed, and thus keeps clear of that region in men's minds where emotion is kindled and where matters of fact are heated into matters of principle. Once a question of fact has become a "matter of principle," it is always difficult and often impossible for arbitration boards to deal with it. This sharp distinction must be realised, because on its recognition hinges the change in the status of the worker. By government and private action he is now being admitted to a place in deciding on the next step, before the next step is taken. Many employers wish a scheme of compulsory arbitration, with penal clauses against striking. The trade unions will not consent, because they do not care for industrial harmony by compulsion. A number of employers will offer co-partnerships and profit-sharing. The trade unions will not consent. Talk of national efficiency and world markets alone will not win the trade unions. To meet their opposition, a measure of control must be granted to them. So joint standing councils of employers and employed have already been formed and will continue to be formed, to secure increased productivity in industry and a better status for labour. . . .

The government accepted the principle of self-government in industry when in the crisis of 1915, Mr. Tennant, representing the government, summoned the labour leaders to organise the forces of labour. The employers and the government were helpless unless aided by the workers themselves. On that day, February 8, 1915, the principle of democratic control in industry was established in the modern state. This system of joint committees had indeed long existed in the

leading trades, where employers and union leaders met to settle disputes. But the white flag of truce was over the conference, while, outside, the battle raged. But Mr. Tennant by his bold measure raised the joint committee to the level of continuous mediation and consultation. . . .

The joint board is part of the machinery for reconstruction. The acceptance of it is an acceptance of the principle of democratic control.

What labour can manage and possesses the right to manage, but has not received the permission to manage, are the conditions of its own life—its working life and its leisure life. The installation of new processes, the introduction of new machinery, the injection of new workers—all these alterations of working conditions have been imposed upon the workers as one puts a new harness on a horse, or shifts him from the plough to the tread-mill. The workers have built up their own system of protective devices to meet these impositions of the oligarchy in control of them. They have limited the output by “going gently” with the work. They have limited the number of apprentices. They have practised sabotage and called strikes. They had no other weapons. The result of these protective devices has been to lessen the volume of production, to give capital a smaller return on its investment and to cut down wages. The policy has been bad for employer and employé. But the policy has received its death blow in this new constitution of labour which I have outlined. Self-government will not offer grave difficulties in the twelve or fifteen highly organised trades, where organised co-operation is understood. It will come much more slowly in the unskilled occupations. . . .

But almost at one stroke, this principle of self-government has been greatly extended. It is all part of the general movement toward the organised state. The employers will form great combines. The workers will continue to develop the strength of trade unions and will exercise that strength in the control of their working conditions. In the next five years workers’ control will be the most discussed item in England’s reconstruction. Because it is in line with democratic tendency, the movement will soon spread to our country. It is time that our statesmen, our social experts, our writers and our industrial leaders begin to study it.



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